

A
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B O O K o f I S A I A H:

W I T H
N O T E S
C R I T I C A L, H I S T O R I C A L, and P R A C T I C A L.

For the U S E o f F A M I L I E S.

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V O L. II.

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o f M A L D O N, i n E S S E X.

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LEMAST

A
P A R A P H R A S E

ON THE
Book of ISAIAH:

WITH
N O T E S
CRITICAL, HISTORICAL, and PRACTICAL.

C H A P. XXXV. S E C T. XLV.

Deliverance of the Jews in the destruction of their enemies an occasion of great and universal triumph and exultation. The lowest spirits to be hereby revived: the incredulous convinced, and old and young break forth into transports. Great plenty promised with perfect security. The temple to resound with songs of praise and thanksgiving.

ISA. XXXV. 1.

THE wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

Isa. xxxv. 1.

UPON the total overthrow SECT. 45. of their enemies (as has been related) the whole land of Isa. xxxv Judea, that was laid waste, shall have a different and most joyful aspect; even the deserts shall seem to be glad, and put on blossoms like the rose, as a testimony

SECT. 45. timony of their most pleasing
gratitude for so signal a mercy.

Isa. xxxv

2 It shall appear to the rescued
people, as if the wilderness was
converted into a most pleasant
garden, and its flowers of exquisite
beauty; and as it were rejoicing
and singing in the most plentiful
and rich produce: *Lebanon* shall
shine illustriously and gloriously
in its extraordinary fertility; *Carmel*
and *Sharon* equal the most fertile
parts of the country for the quantity
and excellent quality of what they
yield: they shall acknowledge the
supreme perfection and dignity of
the Lord, the incomparable attributes

2. It shall blossom abundantly, and
rejoice even with joy and singing,
the glory of a *Lebanon* shall be
given unto it, the excellency of
Carmel and *Sharon*: they shall
see the glory of the Lord, and the
excellency of our God.

a *Lebanon*, &c. The poetic reader will not be displeased
with the version of this passage by our English bard.

*See Lusty Lebanon his head advance,
See nodding forests on the mountains dance,
See spicy clouds from lowly Sharon rise,
And Carmel's FLOWERY TOP PERFUME THE SKIES!*
The saviour comes, by ancient bards foretold;
Hear him, ye deaf, and all ye blind behold!
He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day;
'Tis he th' obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
And bid new music charm th' unfolding ear;
The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe;
No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear,
From every face he wipes off every tear;
The swain in barren deserts with surprize,
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear,
New falls of water murmuring in his ear;
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.

tributes of our preserver and go-^{SECT. 45.}
vernor.

3 & 4. Strengthen
ye the weak hands,
and confirm the fee-
ble knees. Say to
them *that are* of a
fearful heart, be
strong, fear not: be-
hold your God will
come *with ven-*
geance, even God
with a recompence,
he will come and save
you.

Though your danger may be
great and visible, and your fears
awakened before the day dawn
that you shall be relieved, yet be
not discouraged; cheer up your
drooping spirits, collect your
utmost force: and animate one
another, however your confidence
in God may be derided, to conti-
nue and to confirm it so as to dis-
sipate all your fears, and appear
full of vigour and resolution; be
sure of it, your God himself will
come to perform his threaten-
ings of vengeance; God will
come with an abundant recom-
pence to his enemies for the in-
juries they have done his people;
he will come and save you in his
proper person and by his imme-
diate hand.

Isa. xxxv

3 & 4

5. Then the eyes
of the blind shall be
opened, and the ears
of the deaf unstop-
ped.

This event, when it shall hap-⁵
pen, will produce the most sur-
prizing changes; as if the blind
were so greatly affected by some
happy turn in their affairs, as to
open and see with their eyes;
and the deaf, by some extraor-
dinary effort, unstop their ears.

6 & 7. Then shall
the lame *man* leap as
an hart, and the
tongue of the dumb
sing: for in the wil-
derness shall waters
break out, and streams
in the desert. And
the

As if the decrepid with age, or ^{6 & 7}
lame through infirmity, from
some sudden joy should leap and
bound like an hart; and the
tongue of the dumb that never
before pronounced an articulate

B 2

found,

A PARAPHRASE on the

SECT. 45

Isa. xxxv

6 & 7

found, should instantly break forth into singing: there must be an uncommon joy; for the barren wilderness shall become as a well watered meadow; the driest parched desert as if irrigated with plenty of the most refreshing streams: the shrivelled ground shall resemble a pool or lake, and the thirsty cracked soil fountains that flow perpetually; reeds and rushes that grow in moist land, shall be found to flourish in those sandy places where dragons used to lie.

the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* grafs with reeds and rushes.

8 & 9 In this greatly improved country, that from a desert is so richly fertilized, there shall be a common great road, and also a bye-path for foot passengers; and as the peculiar people, whose tenour of actions should correspond with their professions, frequent it much in their visits to the temple, it shall be called the way of holiness: ungodly sinners, unclean persons, and idolaters from foreign parts, shall not move their unhallowed feet in that sacred course; it shall only be travelled by those who are desirous in truth and sincerity, to discharge their duty; it is so direct, plain and easy, that the simplest cannot well mistake his way: they shall not be obstructed or retarded by any ravenous

8. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*.

9. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk *there*.

ravenous wild beasts, that are ^{SECT. 45.} found to lurk there; but the ^{Isa. XXXV} redeemed of the LORD shall ⁹ walk here, to testify their gratitude to him for his goodness and mercy, with perfect liberty and safety.

10. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their ^b heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

His people who fled when the 10 enemy first invaded the land, hearing of his overthrow, shall return to the temple at *Jerusalem*, with songs in their mouths, joy in their hearts, and chearful countenances, which they shall remember as long as time shall last; such a degree of joy and gladness shall they obtain, and such a permanency, that their former griefs and lamentations shall vanish away as if they had never been, whilst they are as dutiful and obedient in their lives, as they are thankful and joyful with their looks and voices.

^b *Heads.* Some understand this, *with heads lifted up and crowns and garlands of ever-greens upon them.*

CHAP. XXXVI. SECT. XLVI.

The event shewed to be agreeable to the foregoing prophecy in an^c historical narrative. Sennacherib with an Assyrian army invades the land of Judea, and appoints Rabshakeh to lay siege to Jerusalem. A very respectable and honourable embassy dispatched to Rabshakeh: his insolent blasphemous and perfidious answer, highly reflecting both on their King and their God; as Hezekiah had enjoined them, they make no reply; only by the strongest marks express their grief, horror, and amazement.

ISA. XXXVI. I.

SECT. 46.

Isa. xxxvi

HOW *Isaiah's* prophetic character was ascertained, may be seen in the following series of remarkable events which he had predicted. Now it happened in the fourteenth year of the reign of king *Hezekiah*, after he had been very zealously and effec-

ISA. XXXVI. I.

NOW it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king *Hezekiah*, that *Sennacherib*, king of *Assyria* came up against all the defended cities of *Judah* and took them.

^c *Historical, &c.* The same is related 2 *Kings* xviii. 13, &c. and paraphrased by Mr. *Pyle*. I acknowledge myself obliged to the judicious labours of that sensible writer; also to *Grotius*, *Kitringer*, *Jackson*, and others; at the same time, do assure the candid reader, that he has my own sentiments, according to the best judgment I have been able to form of the real meaning of the sacred author.

^d *Hezekiah*. *Salmanezzer* had sent to this prince to demand the tribute which *Ahaz* had agreed to pay for the kingdom of *Judea*, in the time of *Tiglath-Pilezer*, his father; but *Hezekiah* trusting in the LORD his GOD, would not hearken unto him, which would immediately have brought *Salmanezzer* upon him with all his power, but that he was diverted by another war. *Peid. Conn.* book I. page 19.

effectually endeavouring a gene-^{SECT. 46.}
ral reformation in the land of *Judea*, an unexpected heavy ^{Isa. xxxvi}
storm was suddenly raised, for,
notwithstanding his presents,
with which *Sennacherib* seemed
satisfied, that monarch marched
a powerful and formidable army
into his dominions, attacked
many of his fortified towns, and
obliged them to capitulate or
took them by storm.

2. And the king
sent *Rabshakeh* from
Lachish to *Jerusalem*,
unto king *Hezekiah*,
with a great army:
and he stood by the
conduit of the upper
pool, in the high-
way of the fuller's
field.

Flushed with his past succes-²
ses, and sanguine of future ones,
the king of *Assyria* sent *Rabsha-
keh* one of his generals, with a large
detached party from the main
body lying at *Lachish*, to encamp
before *Jerusalem*; and in a mes-
sage to king *Hezekiah*, to de-
mand the immediate surrender
of his metropolis; and this offi-
cer fixed his head-quarters on the
south side of the upper city, near
the kings gardens, where there
was a fair way to the fuller's
field; and their linen might be
conveniently washed and whit-
ened.

3. Then came forth
unto him *Eliakim*,
Hilkiah's

An audience having been re-³
quired of the king, *Hezekiah*
did

^e *Rabshakeh*, from his knowledge of the *Hebrew* language,
and great readiness in speaking it, was not improbably an apos-
tate *Jew*, or one of the captivity of *Israel*. As his name de-
notes, by office, he was the king's chief cup-bearer, or butler,
The situation in which he placed his army seems to have been a
very advantageous one. *Neh. iii. 15. 2 Kings xviii. 17. 2 Chron.*
xxxii. 3 and 4.

SECT. 46. did not think it proper to venture himself in person, but dispatched for conferring with his officer, some principal men of his court; viz. *Eliakim* his high steward, *Shebnab* his secretary, and *Joab* his master of the requests, to engage in this important service, and if possible obtain conditions of peace.

Isa. xxxvi

4 This proud servant, of a most imperious and despotic master, delivers the following threatening message to the kings deputies, saying, Return to *Hezekiah*, and tell him, that in the name of the great and invincible *Sen-nacherib*, I insist to know upon what ground thou withdrawest thy usual tribute, and thereby declarest war; or what thou confidest in, that thou dost not instantly submit when I am present with such a mighty force to reduce thee to subjection.

5 I can easily conjecture how thou encouragest thy people; dost thou not tell them (but nothing was ever more futile and vain than such pretences) I have military skill for concerting proper measures; and I can raise a sufficient force for executing them? now what are thy internal resources, or on whom dost thou rely for succour, that are likely

Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and *Shebna* the scribe, and *Joab*, *Asaph's* son, the recorder.

4. And *Rabshakeh* said unto them, say ye now to *Hezekiah*, thus saith the great king, the king of *Affryria*, what confidence is this wherein thou trustest?

5. I say, sayest thou (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war, now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me.

likely to support thee in thy rebellious practices?

SECT. 46.

Isa. xxxvi

6. Lo thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on EGYPT, whereon if a man lean it will go into his hand and pierce it; so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

6 As to thy own strength it is small, and thou canst solicit no foreign aid, nor think of any alliance, unless it be Egypt; which if thou be so weak as to raise any hopes from, therefore be sending embassies, thou wilt find them to disappoint thy hopes; and that petty prince to be cut like a bruised reed, that will wound, instead of supporting the hand that leans upon it.

7. But if thou say to me, we trust in the LORD our GOD; is it not he whose high places, and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, ye shall worship before this altar?

But if thou pretendest a positive assurance from him, and that it is in the God of thy country that thou confidest for protection; where was there ever such a boundless presumption as Hezekiah must have, to expect any thing but the heaviest destruction from the powers above; when he has been so horridly insulting them, by pulling down the sacred groves, altars and chapels, and committing all manner of sacrilege, in order to introduce a worship of his own, or limit it for the sake of his own glory to the frequented place of his royal residence.

f Reed, &c. The wit or humour of this voluminous speaker which he affects, alludes to those reeds or canes that grew in so much plenty on the banks of the Nile.

SECT. 46.

Isa. xxxvi

As to any military preparations, vain man, thou art sensible, thou canst make none to any effect: concerning horses, only give security to my master, that thou wilt restore, if thou are not able to provide men that can manage them; and I will supply thee with a party of two thousand, that thou mayest either engage me in battle, or comply with the conditions of peace I shall propose.

9 If there are so few among you who understand any thing of this branch of the military art, how can you cope, not with my master's whole army, but with the least of his servants who is perfect in it; and with a single squadron able to rout all the force you can bring into the field; and as to your poor ally the *Egyptian*, you must put the foulest deceits on yourself, if you place any trust in him, either for horsemen or chariots, when our troops are visibly sufficient to over-run your whole country.

10 As to his God, that he professes so much to rely on, let him be who he will, and his titles what he pleases to give him, you

8. Now, therefore, give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of *Affyria*, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

9. How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on *Egypt*, for chariots and for horsemen.

10. And am I now come up without the Lord against this land to destroy it? The Lord said unto me,

§ The Lord, &c. In the *Hebrew* *Jehovah*: it was no fault in *Hzekiah* that he did not believe *Senacherib*, because in this pretence

me, Go up against
this land and destroy
it.

you have no reason to expect that SECT. 46.
he will defend you, for he is evi- ^{Isa. xxxvi}
dently engaged on the side of the ₁₀
Assyrians: what stronger proof
can there be of this than their
perpetual triumphs? and what
is signified by his express orders
for me to proceed and attack,
conquer and destroy *Judah*, but
that he will deliver that kingdom
into our hands?

11. Then said *Elia-*
kim and *Shebna*, and
Joah unto *Rabshakeh*,
speak, I pray thee,
unto thy servants in
the *Syriac* language,
for we understand it;
and speak not to us
in the *Jew's* lan-
guage, in the ears of
the people that are
on the wall.

The deputies from king *Heze-* 11
kiab, imagining that the people
who stood within hearing might
be terrified with his high-flown
language, or ranting terms; re-
quested of *Rabshakeh*, to deliver
what he had to say in his own
language, which they well enough
understood, and not in that of
the *Jews*, with whom he was con-
cerned to treat upon publick af-
fairs; not as they apprehended
with the populace, but with the
king and his ministers.

12. But *Rabsha-*
keh said, Hath my
master sent me to
thy master, and to
thee to speak these
words? hath he not
sent me to the men
that sit upon the wall,
that they may eat
their

Rabshakeh, not at all abating ₁₂
as to his manner of outrage and
violence, told them they were
greatly mistaken, and their fel-
low citizens likewise deceived,
if they thought his business was
not with the good people to set
C 2 them

tence he lied to him; as *Necho* to *Jeshiah*, by a like pretence,
but *Necho* pretended only to be sent by *Elohim*, which might be
interpreted of his false *Egyptian* ones, as well as of the true
God. Whereas *Mippi Jehovah* should always signify from the
mouth of the true God *Jehovah*. *Prid. Conn.* book 1, page 55.

SECT. 46.

Isa. xxxvi

12

them right, as well as to negotiate with them: he was especially desirous to prevent them from being imposed on by their prince, and standing it out against a power, that if they did not soon submit to, would be under a necessity of reducing them to the utmost straits of want and misery.

13 In a direct opposition to what they had solicited, *Rabshakeb* either situated himself on an higher eminence, or exalted his voice to a greater degree of vociferation, and in the Jew's language, addressed the people as follows, Hear ye the words of the greatest of monarchs, the matchless king of *Assyria*.

14, 15,
16, & 17

Thus saith the most potent of all crowned heads, be not so weak and foolish, as to be misled and deceived with *Hezekiah's* vain and empty promises of safety and deliverance; which he full well knows, that he is not able to perform: nor yet suffer his idle and extravagant notions about his God supporting him, to withdraw you from accepting the advantageous terms for accommodating matters, proposed by my insuperable master, which must issue in your utter ruin. Not to multiply words; you have no other alternative, but either

their own dung, and drink their own piss with you.

13. Then *Rabshakeb* stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of *Assyria*.

14. Thus saith the king, Let not *Hezekiah* deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you.

15. Neither let *Hezekiah* make you trust in the LORD, saying, the Lord will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of *Assyria*.

16. Hearken not to *Hezekiah*; for thus saith the king of *Assyria*, make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me: and eat ye

ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern.

17. ^h Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

18. *Beware* lest *Hezekiah* persuade you saying, The Lord will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of

either perish, or surrender and conciliate his favour by a large and rich present; if you prefer the latter, you will never have occasion to repent it; you will be established in the peaceable enjoyment of all your rights and privileges in your native country for some time at least; and if ever it shall please my most illustrious Lord, to remove or transplant you, it will be for your own and his greater security, and not at all to your disadvantage; for you shall be carried to a land that is in all respects as beneficial and delightful, as the most pleasant and fertile parts of your own were.

You are, I find, in the greatest danger to fall a sacrifice to my arms, from your religious impositions and delusions. I do therefore, most solemnly warn you

SECT. 46.
Isa. xxxvi
14, 15,
16, & 17

18, 19,
& 20

C 3

^h *Until I come*, &c. 'Tis pity but this monarch had reflected with such sentiments as the following lines contain: neither do I think it would have been improper for several in high stations of our own times, and possibly might have prevented the exhausting of so much treasure, and effusion of so much blood upon a certain occasion.

That though ———

The royal wealth, by war's uncertain chance,
Hath graced alternately the slave and coward,
Yet he alone, the friend of all mankind,
Deserves the name and honour of an hero,
Who draws the sword for freedom, not for fame:
Who arms to stop ambitious wild career,
To curb oppressions arbitrary sway,
And give to man the birth-right of his kind.

SECT. 46.

Isa. xxxvi

18, 19,
& 20.

you to be upon your guard against *Hezekiah's* persuasions; on this head: consider, what can he mean by promising you deliverance from the God of his country? Is this God any thing more or greater than the gods of other provinces? Have they not all in their turns surrendered up their worshippers, as so many preys to the absolute power of the great Assyrian ruler. Whereupon does this *Hezekiah* ground the pretences he makes with respect to his *Jeroboam*, that he should be esteemed wiser or more powerful than any of the rest; or shew more favour to *Jerusalem* than he has done to *Samaria*.

21 To this shocking impiety and gross ignorance of the attributes and character of the supreme and Eternal Being; the people were altogether silent, not speaking a single word by way of answer; for this the king had strictly charged them, no doubt fully satisfied, that the ever-living and true God, would himself in due course answer, if not by words, yet by deeds such as should demonstrate who he was, and how infinitely surpassing all local divinities and heathen idols.

22 As was customary to the *Jews* to bear testimony in gestures as well as words, against blas-

of the hand of the king of *Assyria*.

19. Where are the gods of *Hamath* and *Arphad*? Where are the gods of *Sepharvaim*? and have they delivered *Samaria* out of my hand?

20. Who are they amongst all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver *Jerusalem* out of my hand?

21. But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

22. Then came *Eliakim*, the son of *Hilkiah*, that was over the household, and *Shebna*,

Shebna, the scribe, and *Joah*, the son of *Asaph*, the recorder, to *Hezekiah* with their clothes rent, and told him the words of *Rabshakeh*.

blasphemy, expressive of the ut-
most abomination; the commis-
sioners returned into the royal
presence with their clothes rent,
in detestation of these horrid in-
sults thrown by *Rabshakeh* upon
their God and their religion.

SECT. 46.
If. xxxvi
22

CHAP. XXXVII. SECT. XLVII.

Hezekiah's behaviour upon receiving the above message, and recourse to the temple. An account sent to the prophet Isaiah. An answer encouraging the king. A letter from Senacherib. Hezekiah's prayer consequent upon it.

ISA. xxxvii. 1.

AND it came to pass, when *Hezekiah* heard it, he rent his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.

2. And he sent *Eliakim*, who was over the household, and *Shebna* the scribe and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto *Isaiah* the prophet, the son of *Amoz*.

3. And they said unto him, thus saith *Hezekiah*, this day is a day

ISA. xxxvii. 1.

NO sooner had the com-
missioners reported the
above menaces and blasphemies
to *Hezekiah*, than he gave all
the strongest tokens of an ex-
treme affliction; and immedi-
ately repaired to the temple, most
humbly to supplicate the Al-
mighty and Eternal Jehovah.

At the same time, he dispatch-
ed a considerable number of the
principal persons of his court;
in the same habit of deep mourn-
ing to the prophet *Isaiah*, to re-
present to him the deplorable state
of his city and country, and the
intolerable affronts the insulting
enemies had thrown upon the
great

SECT. 47.
If. xxxvii
1

2, 3, & 4

SECT. 47. great and blessed God of *Israel*; desiring him to intercede with the Almighty and Supreme Majesty, whom he had an especial interest in, by the most fervent prayers, to save the kingdom of *Judah* from the ruin and slavery that threatened it; and the ten tribes were already suffering; and punish the iniquity of this outrageous adversary; our danger says he, is visible and exceeding great, like that of a woman in travel, who after many pangs and throws that seemingly brought the child to the birth, is so perfectly spent, as not to have strength enough left to be delivered, but fears, faints, and dies: thus are our ears grated with the most execrable impieties and menaces, and we have not power, unless Heaven interpose for us, to chastise the presumptuous and ungodly author of them.

5, 6, & 7 Thus the servants of the king delivered their message to the prophet *Isaiah*, and received the following answer; this report, as most certain to be verified, you may make to your royal master, that he need give himself no manner of pain or concern about the insolent carriage of this wicked monarch; the honour of God will, in due course,

a day of trouble and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.

4. It may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of *Rabshakeh*, whom the king of *Assyria*, his master, has sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.

5. So the servants of king *Hezekiah* came to *Isaiah*.

6. And *Isaiah* said unto them, thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, be not afraid of the words thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of *Assyria* have blasphemed me.

7. Behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour and return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

course, very shortly be effectually vindicated by his providence; and as to his attempts upon the land of *Judah*, he shall be seized with a panic fear, or it shall be rescued from him by destroying the greatest part of his army which he is going to lead against the *Ethiopians*, with a hot, violent, and pestilential wind: he who at present was making such havock with the sword amongst foreign nations, and had filled *Jerusalem* with such terrible alarms, should be brought into such distresses as to be glad to return to his own country; where he should be slain in the midst of his subjects by the hands of his sons.

SECT. 47.
Is. xxxvii
5, 6, & 7

8. So *Rabshakeh* returned, and found the king of *Assyria* warring against *Libnah*: for he had heard that he was departed from *Lachish*.

In the mean time *Rabshakeh* 8 receiving no answer from the deputies, returned to give his master an account of the summons he had delivered by them to

i *Blast*, &c. See *Jer. iv. 1.* with the *Arabic* version of that passage, also 2 *Kings xix. 35.*

k *Lachish*, &c. The learned Dean *Prideaux* has it, that on their return, they found *Sennacherib* decamped from *Lachish*, and laying siege to *Libnah*, where hearing that *Tirhakah*, on his finding him gone from *Pelusium*, was marching after him, as in pursuit of one flying from him, he led forth his army against him and gave him a great overthrow; and that, when swelling with his fresh victory over the *Ethiopians*, he was on his full march toward *Jerusalem*, with thorough purpose utterly to destroy that place and all in it, an angel of the Lord went forth, and, in one night, smote in the camp of the *Assyrians*, an hundred fourscore and five thousand men, &c. 'Tis pity but the

SECT. 47. to king *Hezekiah*, leaving *Rabsaris* to carry on the siege, and distress the city, till he should march against it with the whole army. He found *Senacherib* at *Libnah*, for he had left *Lachish*, having either raised the siege, or taken the place.

9, 10, 11, 12, & 13 As to his enterprize against the *Jews*, he is obliged to desist from it at present, and march his forces another way, from the intelligence brought him, that *Tirbakah*, king of *Cush*, in *Arabia*, in confederacy with the *Egyptians*, was leading a numerous army to give him battle: yet previous to his departure, he writes another letter to *Hezekiah*, wherein he repeats, as in a former message, the grossest insults; saying, reckon not yourself

9. And he heard say concerning *Tirhakah*, king of *Ethiopia*, He is come forth to make war with thee.

10. And when he heard it, he sent messengers to *Hezekiah*, king of *Judah*, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, *Jerusalem* shall not be given into the hand of the king of *Assyria*.

11. Behold thou hast

the Dean had mention'd the ancient history that gives an account of a battle fought with *Tirhakah*; also by some good authority ascertained, whether this destruction happened in *Senacherib's* grand army, with which he was hastening to *Jerusalem*, not improbably at the small distance of *Nob*, from whence he is said to shake his hand, chap. x. 32. or that which was left there under *Rabsaris* to carry on the siege; or, which is most likely, in both at one and the same time. *Prid. Con.* vol. I. p. 24.

Josephus reckons this done by a pestilential disease; *Herodotus*, that as the *Assyrians* lay before *Pelusium*, a great many rats coming in the night, and gnawing all their bow-strings in pieces they could not fight. *Jes. Antiq.* l. x. c. 2. *Herod. Hist.* l. xi. c. 141. Similar events are related, *Just. Hist.* l. xix. c. 11. *Died. Exorp.* 306. A pestilential wind gives the most probable account, *Thev. Trav.* p. ii. book I. c. 16 and 20. Respecting *Gozan* and *Haran*, at the 12th verse, *Bochart* hath observed that there were places of these names in *Media*. *Phaleg*, l. iii. cap. 14.

hast heard what the kings of *Affyria* have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

12. Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed: as *Gozen* and *Haran*, and *Rexeph*, and the children of *Eden*, which were in *Telasar*.

13. Where is the king of *Hamath*, and the king of *Arphad*, and the king of the city of *Sepharvaim*, *Hena*, and *Ivan*.

14. And *Hezekiah* received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and *Hezekiah* went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.

15. And *Hezekiah* prayed unto the Lord, saying,

16. O Lord, of hosts, God of *Israel*, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou

self secure in relying on your ^{SECT. 47.} God; I shall not be long absent before I return to your parts, ^{Is. xxxvii} and do to your sorrow convince you, that if he has promised to deliver he has deceived you: he can no more defend those who trust in him from falling into my hands, than the other gods could defend their worshippers, that have shewed to all the world their extreme weakness, and utter inability to do it; when I and my victorious ancestors have required their subjection, and soon compelled them to become tributaries. I have hardly patience with your extravagance, and that you will not open your eyes to see the ruinous and despicable condition of the kings and people all around, who have disputed my claim, or opposed my arms.

Instances might be multiplied, ^{1, 4, 15,} but it is needless, nor can ^{16, 17, 18} you have occasion for a moment's ^{& 19} delay, what answer to make. *Hezekiah*, whatever reason he had to believe that *Senacherib's* proud insults would be short-lived, neglected no expedients for peace and safety; as his first and grand resource, he took the letter, went into the court of the temple, and opened and spread it before the LORD; directing

SECT. 47. recting his face to the sanctuary,
 he also uttered the following
 16. xxxvii humble and pious address: Su-
 14, 15, preme Ruler, and especial Guar-
 16, 17, 18 dian of *Israel*, who deignest by
 & 19 visible tokens to be peculiarly
 present in this holy place: in
 thy everlasting goodness, be thou
 pleased to take our distressed af-
 fairs into thy own most gracious
 hand, to adjust, as is agreeable
 to thy Supreme pleasure, and
 infinitely easy to thy wisdom and
 Omnipotence, to vindicate thine
 own honour, and extricate thy
 people from the resolute attempt
 and reproachful language of this
 blaspheming tyrant: the idol
 deities of the heathens all around
 us, it must be owned have early
 submitted, for they had no power
 to defend their deluded votaries
 from the veteran troops of the
Assyrian army; nothing better
 could be expected from lifeless
 stocks and stones, that are them-
 selves more helpless than the very
 men who pay them reverence
 and profess to rely upon them.
 But, O thou independent and
 Eternal *Jehovah*, do thou display
 thy truth, fidelity and divine ma-
 jesty in the deliverance of thy
 servants whose trust is in thee,
 and demonstrate thyself to be the
 one only God, and absolute sove-
 reign over the universe of being.

thou alone, of all the
 kingdoms of the
 earth, thou hast made
 heaven and earth.

17. Incline thine
 ear, O Lord, and
 hear; open thine
 eyes, O Lord, and
 see; and hear all the
 words of *Sennacherib*,
 which hath sent to
 reproach the living
 God.

18. Of a truth,
 Lord, the kings of
Assyria have laid
 waste all the nations
 and their countries.

19. And have cast
 their gods into the
 fire: for they were
 no gods, but the work
 of mens hands, wood
 and stone; therefore
 they have destroyed
 them.

20. Now, there-
 fore, O Lord our
 God, save us from his
 hand, that all the
 kingdoms of the
 earth may know, that
 thou art the Lord,
 even thou only.

CHAP. XXXVII. SECT. XLVIII.

Message from Isaiah to Hezekiah, that the Lord had heard his prayer. Sennacherib diverted from his enterprize in the siege of Jerusalem. Considerable part of his army destroyed. His retreat to Niniveh, his disgrace and death. Jerusalem delivered. 2 Kings xix. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21 to the end.

ISA. xxxvii. 21.

THEN *Isaiah*, the son of *Amos*, sent unto *Hezekiah*, saying, thus saith the LORD God of *Israel*, whereas thou hast prayed to me against *Sennacherib*, king of *Assyria*.

22. This is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him, The virgin, the daughter of *Zion*, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of *Jerusalem* hath shaken her head at thee.

23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high, even against the holy One of *Israel*?

Isa. xxxvii. 21.

NO sooner had *Hezekiah* SECT. 48. concluded the above humble address and fervent supplication, than a message arrives Is. xxxviii 21, 22, & 23. from the prophet *Isaiah* to the following purpose: thus saith the Supreme *JEHOVAH* and *Israel's* almighty guardian: inasmuch as thou hast expressed in an unfeigned devotion an absolute assistance, and in the extreme anxiety of thy troubled breast implored my protection, against the power and threats of *Sennacherib* king of *Assyria*, take this answer which may lay all thy fears to sleep, and inspire thee with invincible courage: as to all, vain man, that thou art able to perform, both the upper part of the city, and the lower, even all *Jerusalem*, slight, defy, despise thee. O thou self-sufficient being, and shocking instance of an unpardonable folly and impiety, art thou

SECT. 48: thou aware at whom thy scoffs

and blasphemies have been levelled? whom it truly is that

21, 22, & 23 thou hast endeavoured to over-

bear with thy exalted voice, and overlook with thy disdainful eye?

How indubitable his superior strength, and how peerless all his attributes who hath taken the children of *Israel* under his protection?

24 Not only in thy own profane person, but by thy insolent servants hast thou reflected dishonour on the Infinite Majesty: in terms of the utmost ostentation, thou hast arrogated to thyself the merit and glory of all thy successes; saying, what difficulties cannot I surmount, and what towns and fortresses subdue, who have already gained the arduous ascents, and passed over the craggy tops of the loftiest hills with my foot soldiers, and also with my chariots. It must be easy for me to cut down the cedars and fir-trees on mount *Lebanon*, that would retard the further progress of my army; nor can any thing hinder my speedy arrival at the environs of *Jerusalem*.

25 Wherever they were necessary, I have digged, and have been abundantly

24. By thy servants hast thou reproached the LORD, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of *Lebanon*, and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof, and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his *carmel*.

25. 1 I have digged and drank water, and

1 *I have digged*, &c. Probably an *adagium*, or proverbial expression of the ancients, to denote an enterprising person who easily

and with the sole of my feet have I dried up the rivers of the besieged places.

abundantly refreshed with fountains of water : to comport with my designs, I have diverted the courses of rivers, and when they obstructed the siege of any place I had determined to take, I found expedients to dry up their channels.

SECT. 48.

If. xxxvii

26

26. Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps.

From whence, but an insatuated and boundless presumption, art thou enough daring to arrogate to thyself those things which thou must have heard, and mayest be very sensible, truly belonged to me and my all-ruling providence; and that, thou foolish boaster, or thy ancestors, were only instruments in my hand for correcting several nations of the world, who by their idols had denied my supremacy, or in their wicked lives disobeyed my laws. Thou hadst my permission indeed, I had previously devoted them to destruction, or thy attempt had been in vain, and

easily surmounts the greatest difficulties, and certainly accomplishes whatever he undertakes. By *Matzar*, rendered *besieged places*; *Bochart*, *Oecolompadins*, and *Kimchius*, understand the same as *Mitzraim*, and interpret, *I have dried up the rivers of Egypt*: i. e. I will enter as easily into *Egypt*, on which you rely, as if when I came thither, all the rivers wherewith it is environed were dried up. Similar to that of the *Gothic* general *Alaric*, in *Claudian*.

Subfidere nostris

Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.

De Bell. Get. l. iv. vers. 16 and 26.

SECT. 48. and thy successes very inconsiderable.

M. xxxvii

27 The people of various provinces, as I had delivered them up, were easily subdued, had no strength nor courage to make resistance, were thrown into a general consternation, and presently vanquished: they fell like the bending grass of the field, and the tender herb; as the grass on the house-tops, it has no depth of rooting; and the corn which is blasted and withered before it attain to any maturity; there was no difficulty in making them sacrifices.

27. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power; they were dismayed and confounded: they as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house-tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

28 & 29

I am not unacquainted with any particulars of thy designs or proceedings; without me thou canst neither form nor execute any scheme at all; and since thou dost not consider this, but art grown so impious and fool-hardy as to be risen up in an avowed rebellion against the power that exalted thee; thou shalt know that I resent it, and shalt feel the weight of my displeasure: I will give a sovereign check to thy most fulsome pride, and cause thee to return with signal marks of my dreadful vengeance to thy native country.

28. But I know thy abode, and thy going out and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

29. Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into my ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way which thou camest.

30 And as to thy deliverance, O king *Hezekiah*, be assured of it by the following token; the *Assyrian*

30. And this shall be a sign unto thee, ye shall eat this year such as growth of itself

self, and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

Affyrian hath greatly harrassed your country, and so destroyed its fruit, that you cannot, this season, attend to agriculture: the ensuing one is the sabbatical year, wherein you are to live upon the natural produce of your ground; yet you shall have in these so plentiful a self-sown crop, as sufficiently to supply your wants, till you shall again sow and reap in peace and safety.

SECT 48.

If. xxxviii

30

31. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of *Judah* shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

And those *Jews* who shall remain and survive the series of calamities that will shortly befall them, shall, conformable to the promises made to the family of *David*, long continue a body politic, happy and prosperous under the government of their own king, and in subjection to their own laws.

31

32. For out of *Jerusalem* shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount *Zion*: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.

As for the city *Jerusalem* which the proud *Affyrian* had the horrid boldness to intimate, that its God should not defend it; the people that were shut up within her walls shall go out without fear or danger: they who had fled thither for safety shall return to them and find rest and peace in their usual habitations. The residue shall enjoy all their liberties and privileges; for such affectionate regard hath the Lord, who with infinite ease can perform what-

32

SECT. 48. ever pleases him, determined to
 shew for his own honour in his
 people's welfare and happiness.

II. xxxvii

33 And since it is his fixed purpose to preserve and defend *Jerusalem*, the Lord hath expressly declared, respecting the king of *Assyria*, that he shall not be suffered to come into this city to assault it by shooting arrows, and a regular siege: a total inactivity shall prevail in his army, that they shall not attempt to scale the walls, to cover themselves with shields, or to throw up ramparts, and from thence discharge darts and javelins.

34 It is repeated, and may be fully depended on, that he shall be made quite sick of all further military enterprizes, and shall return in the greatest dishonour to his own country; who lately marched with so much ardour and intrepidity, splendour and magnificence, at the head of a large body of well-disciplined and gallant troops.

35 They have not been so grateful as might have been expected, but have sometimes deserved to be severely punished, nevertheless, the inhabitants of this city shall

33. Therefore thus saith the Lord, concerning the king of *Assyria*, he shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

34. By the way that he came, by the same way shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord.

35. For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant *David's* sake.

^m Return. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21. it is added, with shame of face.

shall be favoured with my protection, on my own account, and to support and maintain there the knowledge of virtue and true religion: on king *David*, my servants also, who with all his errors and miscarriages was full of zeal for my cause, it shall not be soon delivered up to irretrievable destruction.

SECT. 48.

If. xxxvii

35

36. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the *Assyrians* a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses.

Not long after, as *Senacherib* was returning flushed with victory over the confederate *Ethiopian* and *Egyptian* army, and in full march to besiege *Jerusalem*, as if an angel had been sent from the Lord to make this dreadful devastation, a pestilential distemper broke out among his troops, which in one night's time destroyed the greatest part of them, so that when they arose early in the morning the survivors had very few to behold in their camp that were not dead corpses.

37. So *Senacherib*, king of *Assyria*, departed,

The horror of this extreme disaster, and the probable use that

D 2

ⁿ The *Babylonish Talmud* hath it that this destruction was executed by lightning, and some of the *Targums* are quoted for saying the same thing. The *Arabic* version renders it an hot pestilential wind, which as has been observed in a former note is most probable, and which frequently happens to vast caravens of the *Mahometans*, going their annual pilgrimage to *Mecca*, and destroys great multitudes of them in a moment: this seems denoted by the words of *Isaiah*, that threatened *Senacherib* with a blast that God would send upon him. *Prid. Conn. B. 1. p. 25.*

SECT. 48. that *Tirbakab* might be disposed
 to make of it, caused him to
 hasten his return home to his capital at *Niniveh*, in the utmost confusion; where he spent the remainder of his days in obscurity, neglect, and contempt: which threw him into such gloominess and melancholy, cruelty, and arbitrary practices, as rendered him at length intolerable to his own family; so that two of his sons conspired against his life, and after slaying him fled their native country; while the crown was fixed on the head of a third son, named *E-sarhaddon*.

If. xxxvii
 37 & 38

parted, and went, and returned, and dwelt at *Niniveh*.

38. And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of *Nizroch*, his god, that *Adramelech* and *Sharezer* his sons, smote him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of *Armenia*: and *E-sarhaddon*, his son, reigned in his stead.

CHAP. XXXVIII. SECT. XLIX.

Hezekiah's sickness. His humble supplication. The speedy answer, and his recovery. His song of thanksgiving. The sign requested, or the prodigy which attended this circumstance, viz. of the shadows going back ten degrees.

ISA. xxxviii. 1.

IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death: and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live.

ISA. xxxviii. 1.

HEZEKIAH's reign was remarkable for the following extraordinary circumstances; while the Assyrian monarch threatened his destruction, and was making great preparations to invade his country, he was seized with a most dangerous distemper, and his life despaired of: the prophet Isaiah also sent to ascertain the matter, and in the name of the Lord advise him, saying, hold thyself in readiness as becomes a dying man, for thy present illness is mortal and incurable.

re-SECT. 49.

1. xxxviii

2. Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying,

3. Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy

Such a sentence, so seemingly severe and absolute, greatly affected this excellent monarch, as the situation of public affairs was very precarious, and he had no legitimate issue to succeed him: requesting, therefore, the company of occasional visitors to withdraw, and turning his face

D 3

from

SECT. 49. from those whose province it was thy sight: and *Hezekiah* ^o wept fore.

to be constantly in waiting, he
If. xxxviii

2 & 3

addressed to the Almighty the following earnest and very affectionate supplication: I most humbly intreat, great and good God, that thou wilt remember in what simplicity and sincerity of virtue my former life has been conducted; and with what vigour of unwearied endeavour I have prosecuted the important work of a general reformation among my subjects; to the utmost of my power have laboured to restore the knowledge and practice of true religion: not, I hope, without some success: graciously concur with my endeavours, let them not be in vain: look with pity on my distressed kingdom, suffer not my early mortality to blast all our future hopes: at the same time, a flood of tears gushed from his weeping eyes.

4 & 5

The prophet had but just departed from the royal presence before he had express orders from a most gracious God, immediately to return with a new message

4. Then came the word of the Lord to *Isaiah*, saying,

5. Go and say to *Hezekiah*, Thus saith the Lord, the God of *David*

^o *Wept fore*, one reason for his shedding tears might be that he had not got a son to survive and succeed him on the throne, for he lived after this fifteen years, and when he died, *Menassah* was but twelve years old, therefore must have been born after this sickness.

David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold I will add unto thy days *p* fifteen years.

sage, intimating, that thus saith ^{SECT. 49.} the Supreme Being, the God of ^{Is. xxxviii} thy father *David*, mine ears have ^{4 & 5} been open to thy fervent prayer, mine eyes sympathized with thy flowing tears, and in answer thy days shall be prolonged to the farther date of fifteen years, wherein several very important and desirable events may take place.

6. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of *Assyria*, and I will defend this city.

One very interesting circumstance thou mayest be assured of, that whatever the king of *Assyria* hath designed to thy dishonour and

D 4

p Fifteen years, it is added in the history, that on the third day he should go up to the house of the Lord. 2. Kings, xx. 6. 'Tis also said, that when *Hezekiah* desired a sign of *Isaiah*, two different signs were left to his option; either that the shadow of the sun-dial should go backward or forward ten degrees; and that *Hezekiah* said, it was a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees, but desired rather that the shadow might return backward ten degrees. 2 Kings. xx. 8, 9, 10, and 11. This wonder is said to have happened before his deliverance from the *Assyrian* army, though it is postponed in the sacred history: because the prophet at one and the same time, assures him both of that deliverance and of his recovery: and it is supposed, that the beams of the sun [being miraculously inflicted] caused the shadow to go back over ten of the degrees, which it had passed upon *Ahaz's* dial, or flight of steps. The whole miracle therefore to have consisted in the bare reversion of the sun's beams. Univ. Hist. vol. iv. p. 165. But the primate *Usher* in his *Annals* observes, that the sun and all the heavenly bodies went back, and as much was detracted from the next night, as was added to this day. *Herodotus* in his *Enterpe*, c. cxlii. says the *Egyptians*, had observed certain strange alterations in the sun; that it had risen four times out of its usual course; rising twice where it now sets, and setting twice where it now rises; and yet no change at all made in the earth, in the rivers, nor in any thing else. An evidence, as well as some accounts transmitted from *Babylon*, that they had heard of some unusual appearances, but had not a perfect knowledge how they happened.

SECT. 49. and the prejudice of thy people,
 shall prove enirely abortive: I
 will undertake your protection
 and deliverance, therefore you
 may rest satisfied that you are
 perfectly secure.

7, & 8 And this shall be a certain
 token from the Lord himself,
 that what he has been pleased to
 engage for he will infallibly per-
 form: the shadow of the de-
 grees which is gone down ten
 degrees in the sun-dial of *Abaz*,
 shall return back so many de-
 grees, steps, or measures, which
 happened according to the pro-
 phet's prayer: the sun to all ap-
 pearance had a retrograde mo-
 tion given it, without any visible
 disorder in the state of the cele-
 stial orbs; but whether by means
 of some meteor-like light shin-
 ing similar to, and in a different
 position from that of the sun, or
 by whatever other way, does not
 seem to be so clearly and fully
 ascertained.

9 & 10 King *Hezekiah* composed the
 following hymn, as a testimony
 of his gratitude for God's un-
 speakable goodness in recovering
 him from a most threatening
 malady, and for the benefit of
 poste-

7. And this shall
 be a sign unto thee
 from the Lord, that
 the Lord will do this
 thing that he hath
 spoken.

8. Behold, I will
 bring again the sha-
 dow of the degrees
 which is gone down
 in the sun-dial of
Ahaz, ten degrees
 backward. So the
 sun returned ten de-
 grees, by which de-
 grees it was gone
 down.

9. The writing of
Hezekiah king of Ju-
 dah, when he had
 been sick and was re-
 covered of his sick-
 nefs.

10 I said in the
 cutting off of my
 days,

q *Writing*, &c. The original signifies to write by engraving:
 to impress a strong mark, to describe a person, to portray the plan
 of a country. To register, or enter upon record, a writing that
 it may long remain.

days, I shall go to the gates of the grave : I am deprived of the residue of my years.

posterity committed it to writing, that they might entertain a thankful lasting lease of them if ever they received the like favours. In the violence of my tortures, especially under the sentence declared by the prophet, I reflected as follows. To all intents and purposes I may reckon myself already dead ; for after a few more fluttering pulses, there will be an entire cessation of all motion and action : with one far-fetched sigh I shall have bidden the world adieu, and entered through the dismal gates which are open into the silent grave, being by an untimely fate in the flower of my age deprived of those years, which, in the ordinary course of nature, I might have expected to have lived.

11. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living : I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

What gives me a very deep concern and unfeigned heavy affliction, is the pleasing communion I have enjoyed with God in his ordinances, and satisfaction in social worship with my fellow-creatures, will never more return in this world : when once
my

Deserved of, literally, I am made to miss or want.

This world. The radix signifies to *cease*, to *leave off*, to *desist*, and the passage should be rendered, *I shall behold man no more, when I am with the inhabitants of cessation, i. e. with the dead.* Psal. xxxix. 4. *How frail, &c. how ceasing I am, i. e. how much I hasten to a total cessation of life.*

SECT. 49.

Is. xxxviii

9 & 10

SECT. 49. my eyes are closed in obscure
 { darknefs, what will fignify rela-
 II. xxxviii tionships or friendships, the moft
 II rational converfe or tenderest ties ;
 they will all be at an entire end
 with the noblest fatisfaction of
 doing good and promoting hap-
 12 pinefs.

As to any future account to
 be given of the number of my
 years, mine age, with my de-
 parture from the prefent ftate,
 is arrived at a final period : and
 as the wandering *Arabs* roll up
 their tents, or transitory shep-
 herds remove their flocks, when
 one is eaten to a fresh pasture,
 fo muft I leave this for fcenes of
 a different nature, for an un-
 known region, a new and un-
 tried being. As a weaver, whe-
 ther he have finifhed it or not,
 yet when he has wrought as far
 as he intended, cuts off his web
 and takes it out of the loom : fo
 it happens to the thread of my
 life ;

12. Mine age is
 departed, and is re-
 moved from me as a
 shepherd's tent: I
 have cut off like a
 weaver my life : t he
 will cut me off with
 pining ficknefs: from
 day even to night
 wilt thou make an
 end of me.

t *He will cut me off with pining ficknefs.* In the margin it is
 from the *thrum*, or the loofe thread of the woof faftened to the
 weaver's beam. i. e. he will utterly cut me off, *from day even to*
night ; i. e. all the day long from the morning even to night
 thou wilt be hewing me down, fo that there is not a moment
 wherein I am not in fear of death : or thou wilt prefently dif-
 patch me : this very day before night, there will be an end of
 me. *Job iv. 20. A mane ad vefperam succinentur.* The mean-
 ing is, that as a weaver, thou weaveft the threads of my life,
 it may be but a fhort web at moft, and fcarce of a fingle day. In
 the morning thou beginneft it, and as if it repented thee, before
 the evening thou haft finifhed thy labour.

life; my disease is continually waſting the poor materials it has to work on, and in a ſhort time muſt have exhausted or quite conſumed them.

SECT. 49.

lf. xxxviii

12

13. I reckoned till morning, that as a lion, ſo will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.

13

Though I had finiſhed, in throbbing pain and inward great perplexity; the foregoing day, yet at evening I did not expect that I ſhould live to ſee the return of morning; it is as impoſſible, I thought, for me long to ſubſiſt in this extremity of miſery, as it is for the delacerated prey of a fierce and ravenous lion.

14. Like a crane or a ſwallow, ſo did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward, O Lord, ^u I am oppreſſed, undertake for me.

14

I truly reſembled, by the conſuſed noiſe of my muttering voice intermixed with ſighs and groans, the low and hoarſe ſounds of cranes or ſwallows, when they are deſtitute of food. or have been ſpoiled of their young; I ſobbed alſo in the piteous ſtrains, and complained in the ſoſteſt murmurs of the mourning dove: I could hardly keep open my heavy eyes, or liſt them up to him, from whom alone I could hope for ſupport or help;

^u I am oppreſſed, &c. The expreſſions are figurative, and Hezekiah's diſtemper compared to a rough bailiff, or relentless creditor, that would hurry the unfortunate and inſolvent debtor to priſon, unleſs ſome humane good man would interpoſe and give bail for him; this he conſiders as a proper emblem of his own unhappy caſe, unleſs the Lord would vouchſafe to be his ſecurity, and releaſe him from his inveterate diſeaſe which he thus repreſents by the violent hands of unmerciful mortals.

SECT. 49. help; at length, the following
 M. xxxviii ejaculatory address burst out
 14 from my labouring breast; Most
 gracious sovereign, nature is
 quite overset with this malady,
 it cannot hold out much longer,
 but must sink under the burden
 unless in thy great goodness thou
 art pleased to relieve me.

15 But why do I expatiate on the
 grievousness of my past illness,
 when I should in transports be
 enlarging on the unspeakable
 mercy of my recovery. My
 good God, whom I ought for
 ever to adore; by the same pro-
 phet, in almost the same instant,
 that he alarmed, quieted my
 fears, sent and revoked the sum-
 mons of mortality, assuring me
 of a prolongation of my days:
 he hath performed that which he
 hath spoken. I will shew the
 utmost solicitude to walk cir-
 cumspectly; and whenever I re-
 collect that I have been greatly
 afflicted, it shall likewise occur
 how wonderfully preserved
 and restored, and how careful
 I ought to be never to offend a
 God of such mercy.

16 'Tis by thy favour and the
 kind dispositions of thy provi-
 dence, ever-blessed God, that
 man's

15. What shall I
 say? he hath spoken
 unto me, and himself
 hath done it: I shall
 go softly all my
 years in the bitter-
 ness of my soul.

16. O Lord, *by
 these things men live,
 and in all these things
 is

* By these things, &c. i. e. the application of well adapted
 remedies, with a divine concurrence and blessing to give them
 success

the life of my spirit; so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

man's being is supported and maintained; entirely owing to thy benignity that my life is renewed, and my spirit continued to animate this body: thou wilt, I am certain, perfect the work thou hast begun, and I shall enjoy myself for the remainder of my years, in as much perfection, with as much pleasure as is truly good for me.

SECT. 49.
If. xxxviii.
16

17. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

At the very time that in the ease, health and peace indulged me, the candle of the Lord shone upon my tabernacle, and I had no apprehension that so malignant a disorder was likely to attack me; I was nevertheless surprized with this painful and dangerous indisposition: thou most indulgent parent, hast been graciously pleased to recover me when I was descending into the grave, as it were to call me back; the favour and forgiving mercy ought never to be forgotten, that I am not charged so as to be justly punished for the multitude of my errors and offences.

18. For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go

The certain meaning of my health restored and life prolonged is, that I may perform in this world,

success. The latter of these, the recovered monarch would doubtless have understood, and his impressive sense of the inestimable favour in his own. All the circumstances unite and agree to establish this sentiment.

SECT. 49. world, what I could not have done in that land of forgetfulness, the silent grave, even celebrate God's praises, and trust in his power and goodness: this I am fully resolved to do, I rejoice in the opportunity my recovery promises me; my heart truly overflows with love and gratitude, that I who have been within the confines of the dead, do certainly live; and a most desirable season is afforded me of glorifying my maker, and recommending his worship and service to all the successive generations of mankind; let parents early inform the rising generation on what great things an ever-blessed God hath done; and instruct them to adore his Attributes, and habituate themselves to the observance of his laws.

20 A peculiar readiness and seasonableness, as well as goodness and mercy, were remarkably manifested in God's memorable interposition to preserve my life; I hope, it will be a public blessing, and both king and people express in the properest manner, upon the joyful occasion an unfeigned thankfulness; even all our future days, congratulate one another, in the holy temple, with

go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

19. The living, the living he shall praise thee as I do this day: the fathers to the children shall make known thy truth.

20. The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life, in the house of the Lord.

with the solemnities of worship ^{SECT. 49.} and service.

^{Is. xxxviii}

21. For *Isaiah* had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

The prophet had particularly ²¹ directed, that a quantity of figs should be applied in a plaister to the parts affected, which being done, caused the distemper to discharge itself in a large sore, and relieved the king from his anguish.

22. *Hezekiah* also had said, what is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord.

The tidings of so perfect and ²² speedy a cure, that within three days the king should be able to go up and render public acknowledgment of the favour in the house of the Lord, was so acceptable, unexpected and surprising, that his majesty not out of any real diffidence, as to the divine promise, or the prophet's veracity who reported it, but out of an earnest desire, to have his faith in so pleasing a circumstance, most fully confirmed: humbly intreated *Isaiah*, for a previous ratification by some visible token or miracle.

CHAP. XXXIX. SECT. L.

Congratulatory embassy sent to Hezekiah on his recovery by the king of Babylon. His pleasure in the honour thereby done him, and impolitic behaviour on the occasion. The prophet's remonstrance, and prediction of the Babylonish captivity. Hezekiah's acquiescence and thankfulness, that there should be an uninterrupted peace during his life and reign.

Isa. xxxix. 21.

SECT. 50.

Isa. xxxix

THE fame of those extraordinary circumstances that attended the recovery of Hezekiah's health, with the publick thanksgivings performed upon that joyful occasion, spread to Babylon; and engaged its monarch, with the advice of his princes and nobles, to dispatch to him an honourable embassy, with letters and a royal present: probably both to congratulate, and to court an alliance for strengthening him against the growing power of the king of Assyria.

This

ISA. xxxix. 21.

AT that time y Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.

y Merodach, &c. this was Merodach or Mordac Embadus, the son of Baladan, Belesis, or as Nicolas Damascenus calls him, Nannibrus, the same with Nabonassar, from the beginning of whose reign at Babylon commenceth the famous astronomical *Æra*, stiled from him the *Æra* of Nabonassar, being the father of Merodac or Mordac Embadus, who sent a congratulatory embassy to king Hezekiah upon his recovery. *Prid. Conn. B. 1, Joseph. Antiq. l. x. c. 3.*

2. And *Hezekiah* was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour; and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominions, that *Hezekiah* shewed them not.

3. Then came *Isaiah* the prophet unto king *Hezekiah*, and said unto him, what said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And *Hezekiah* said, they are come from a ^z far country

This remarkable instance of SECT. 50. a very distinguishing respect from ^{lf. xxxix} a crowned head in so remote a ² country, of whose amicable dispositions he had no reason to be doubtful, gave *Hezekiah* a peculiar satisfaction, indeed threw him into a kind of transport; so that he not only gave the envoys a most gracious audience, but directed his principal officers of state, to entertain them with a sight of every thing that was valuable, precious or curious within his realm: his arsenals, the strength of his kingdom, and richness of his treasury: there was truly nothing of consequence to be known, that he did not after the most open and unre-served manner perfectly communicate.

This step of an over-hasty ³ and impolitic behaviour in *Hezekiah*, occasioned a speedy visit from the prophet *Isaiah*; no sooner were the *Babylonians* dismissed, than he waited upon his majesty, requesting to be informed, upon what important

^z Far country, &c. *Hezekiah* could hardly reckon *Babylon* very remote from *Judea*; may not the expression signify then that they were not much known in this country, as at this time the people of that land were not a powerful state compared with their mighty neighbour the king of *Assyria*. However, the word of the Lord is stedfast for ever; and a hundred and twenty-five years afterwards, this prophecy, to the minutest circumstance, was accomplished.

SECT. 50. ¹business those ambassadors had been admitted; likewise from ²what country they came, and ³in what manner he had treated them. To whom the king, with his usual ingenuity, immediately answers, that they were an embassy dispatched to pay his congratulatory respects, from a mighty monarch, at so considerable a distance as the city of *Babylon*.
country unto me, even from *Babylon*.

⁴ *Hezekiah* replied, 'tis natural to imagine, from so long a journey, that an high opinion has been raised of our court and national character; and I have omitted nothing that I thought expedient to confirm them in these sentiments: I have freely discovered to them every thing that might entertain them as men of rank, or, as foreigners, they might be curious to know, in my palaces and treasures.

^{5, 6, & 7} Upon this precipitate and impolitic proceeding, the prophet very seriously observes in the following words of the Lord: your conduct has been extremely ill-judged, and unsuitable to your circumstances: your business it is principally to rely upon the divine protection, and neither affect to make a vain parade of your wealth and greatness; nor be so afraid as to court the alliance

⁴ Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And *Hezekiah* answered, all that is in mine house they have seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

⁵ Then said *Isaiah* to *Hezekiah*, Hear the word of the Lord of Hosts.

⁶ Behold the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to *Babylon*; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.

7. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away: and they shall be a eunuchs in the palace of the king of *Babylon*.

liance of any heathen powers. SECT. 50.
 Your mistake then in the present affair is palpably plain; but If. xxxix
 since you have been in the main 5, 6, & 7
 a good and religious governor, you shall no further suffer from this instance of extreme imprudence, than to have the mortification to hear that a time will come, after you are gathered to your fathers, when, for the incorrigible vices of your successors in the throne, and a prevailing dissolution of manners among the people, all these treasures and rarities, and every thing valuable in the kingdom, shall become a spoil to the power which you have been so unwarily caressing: the country shall fall into the hands of the *Babylonish* monarch; all its chief inhabitants shall be transplanted, and even the descendants of the royal family become servants and attendants in his court.

E 2

Heze-

^a *Eunuchs, &c.* *Nebuchadnezzar* having made himself master of *Jerusalem*, and taken *Jehoiakim* prisoner, caused great numbers of the people to be sent captives to *Babylon*, and particularly gave orders to *Ashpenaz*, master of the eunuchs, that he should make choice out of the children of the royal family, and of the nobility of the land, such as he found to be of the fairest countenance and the quickest parts, to be carried to *Babylon*, and there made eunuchs in his palace. Whereby was fulfilled the word of the Lord spoken by *Isaiah* the prophet to *Hezekiah*, king of *Judah*, above an hundred years before. 2 Kings: xx. 18. *Dan*. i. 3. *Prid. Conn.* 1 vol. p. 62.

SECT. 50.

Hezekiah received, with great humility and resignation, this heavy prediction : It is perfectly righteous, said he, that my offence should be thus animadverted to, and the wickedness of so sinful a nation punished : neither can I be sufficiently thankful for the delay of deserved judgments, and that they shall not be inflicted during my life and reign : I do not ungratefully forget the fifteen years that are added to my days ; I ought to esteem it an unspeakable privilege that I shall live and die in peace ; and I do please myself with hopes, notwithstanding the prophetic threatening to the land, that a most righteous and good God will, in the midst of judgment, remember mercy.

If. xxxix

8. Then said *Hezekiah* to *Isaiah*, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken : he said, moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my days.

CHAP. XL. SECT. LI.

The people to be comforted in their captivity with the promises of restoration. Particulars of this desirable event : representation of the illustrious attributes and character of the unrivalled and Supreme Being.
1—18.

ISA. XL. 1 & 2.

COMFORT ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.

2 ^b Speak ye comfortably to *Jerusalem*, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned : for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

ISA. XL. 1 & 2.

IT has been foretold, and the SECT. 51.
Jews shall certainly be sub-
jected, for their manifold trans- Isa. xl.
gressions, to the severe chastise- 1 & 2
ment of a long and tedious captivity in the kingdom of *Babylon*: yet, saith the Lord, I cannot but pity even the deserved miseries of my afflicted people ; and do enjoin you, my prophets, to administer to them support and consolation : do you affectionately declare to the dejected sinners of *Jerusalem*, that which may revive their mournful hearts : raise loud your voices, and lay the strong emphasis of a most positive assurance, that the time appointed for the continuance of their bondage is compleated, that they shall be again received into favour, and their offences forgiven :
E 3

^b *Speak you comfortably*, literally, *speak to the heart*, that is, such words as are acceptable and pleasing, kind, friendly, and encouraging.

The

SECT. 51.

Iſa. xl.

1 & 2

given: the punishments and miseries they have already undergone, the Almighty, in his mercy, is pleased to account sufficient to atone for the past trespasses, and put a stop to all future rigorous proceedings: 'tis time, he reckons now, that their enemies should be corrected and his people delivered.

3 & 4 As harbingers or pioneers are sent before to remove all difficulties or obstructions out of the way that a prince or general have to travel, methinks I hear the messengers of the most high God publishing his gracious designs for his people, and directing a plain and fair road to be prepared in the desert, for him to conduct their safe and easy return to their native country: whatever of descents or acclivities, crooked paths or rough places, that would make their journies incommodious, to remove

3. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God.

4. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.

The British bard's very elegant lines on this noble and sublime passage, may entertain the poetic reader.

Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers:

Prepare the way! a God, a God appears:

A God! a God! the vocal hills reply,

The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.

Lo earth receives him from the bending skies!

Sink down ye mountains, and ye vallies rise!

With heads declin'd, ye cedars, homage pay;

Be smooth, ye rocks, ye rapid floods give way!

The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold;

Hear him, ye deaf, and all ye blind behold!

move and render perfectly pro-^{SECT. 51.}
per for the most pleasing motion ^{Isa. xl. 4.}
or quickest expedition.

5. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

In this extraordinary transaction shall the most glorious attributes of the Eternal Deity be illustriously manifest; his omnipotence, wisdom, and benevolence, his faithfulness, truth, and mercy: all nations shall confess his mighty hand, and stand amazed at the signal displays of his transcendent majesty: the work is distinguishingly great, 'tis what he had promised, and nothing could possibly intervene to hinder, but it should in due season be performed.

6. The voice said cry, and he said, what shall I cry? all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.

7. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

8. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

I heard a second time the same ^{6, 7, & 8} voice from heaven, that had before charged me, as a prophet, to comfort the *Jewish* captives, commanding me to speak to them aloud: upon which I enquired what it was that I should declare, and was answered as follows: Proclaim that all mortal men are transitory and perishable beings; neither is their greatest excellence of longer continuance or more certainty than the withering grass or fading flower: attend, O my people, and consider that how happy and prosperous you may be at present, yet you shall be carried away captives to *Babylon*;

SECT. 51. that great and powerful empire

^{Isa. xl.} may intend and menace you with

^{6, 7, & 8} a perpetual slavery, but you shall, after a number of years, be delivered; all human affairs are liable to vicissitudes and in a constant rotation: as the grass with a little sharper breath of wind decays, and the beauty of the flower is no more, so is all the glory of weak and frail man, if the Almighty in his displeasure blow upon him, reduced to nothing; his greatest designs and firmest purposes are easily swept away as dust; but, whatever power or pride of this creature would oppose it, the counsel of the Lord shall for ever stand.

9 O ye favourite tribes who belong to mount *Zion* and *Jerusalem*, to the utmost that you are able; spread abroad the pleasing intelligence that liberty is granted you to return home from *Babylon*, that the greatest numbers may hear and be satisfied the report is true, and no bad consequences to be dreaded; declare it to the inhabitants of the cities of *Judah*, you have no reason to despair, your helper is at hand,
your

9. c O *Zion*, that bringest good tidings get thee up into the high mountain: O *Jerusalem*, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up; be not afraid: say unto the cities of *Judah*, behold your God.

c O *Zion*, &c. The marginal reading is, O thou that tellest good tidings to *Zion*, &c. O thou that tellest good tidings to *Jerusalem*, &c. The last clause also, and the recompence for his work before him.

your God now appears, your ^{SECT. 51.} enemies to their sorrow shall know it, and you shall be saved. ^{Isa. xl. 9}

10. Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: ^d behold his reward is with him, and his work before him.

Lift up your eyes, conspicu-¹⁰ously glorious are the displays of Almighty power in the destruction of your adversaries; and in your restoration, his strength is manifest to be all sufficient for the support of his dignity and authority over all his creatures; his work is most obvious and plain before him; proportionable rewards or punishments are ready to be distributed, there is nothing to obstruct his power, no circumstance concealed from his knowledge, nor any respect of persons to bias his judgment, that he shall not proceed according to the measures of good and evil that are to be found in them.

11. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are ^e with young.

Having, with all due care,¹¹ gathered them together from their widest dispersions; in the further conduct of the collective body, he shall act the part of a most diligent shepherd to his flock; he shall give a particular attention

^d Behold, &c. The marginal reading is, *behold the Lord God will come against the strong*, i. e. the mighty enemies of his people, the Babylonians.

^e With young. The original signifies in 1 Sam. vi. 7 and 10, cattle which have brought forth their young; therefore, not improbably, should be so rendered in this passage. Also Gen. xxxiii. 13. and Psal. lxxx. 71.

SECT. 51. ¹¹ tention to the weak and feeble,
 the lambs newly yeaned, or ewes
 big with young and soon wearied:
 he shall slowly drive, or gently
 lead, and sometimes carry them;
 such kind concern will the Lord
 express for the safety and guidance
 of his people, throughout their
 long and tedious journey to their
 native country.

Isa. xl.

12 His affection is that of a
 most wise and good father, he
 cannot want the ability to go-
 vern, who with infinite ease can
 create a world is undeniably cer-
 tain: and since the Almighty
 has engaged to be their guardian,
 how perfectly secure they are;
 his wisdom must be infallible,
 and his power boundless, who
 with such accuracy of proportion
 hath

12. f Who hath
 measured the waters
 in the hollow of his
 hand? and meted
 out heaven with a
 span, and compre-
 hended the dust of
 the earth in g a mea-
 sure, and weighed
 the mountains in
 scales, and the hills
 in a balance.

f *Who hath measured, &c.* Milton has been understood to re-
 fer to this place, in his truly sublime description of the *Messiah*,
 as going down into *chaos* at the head of his angels, and drawing
 the first outlines of a future creation.

Nor staid; but on the wings of *cherubims*,
 Uplifted in paternal glory rode
 Far into *chaos*, and the world unborn;
 For *chaos* heard his voice: him all his train
 Followed in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepared
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot he centered, and the other turned
 Round, through the vast profundity obscure;
 And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
 This be thy just circumference, O world!

g *Measure*, in the original, a *tierce*, or *small measure*.

hath made, and regularity of SECT. 51.
 order disposed of the largest bo- Isa. xl.
 dies of heaven, earth and sea; 12
 the same as if he had measured
 out in the hollow of his hand
 the greatest quantities of waters,
 fixed the dimensions of the sky
 with the span of his fingers,
 by some small measure that
 contained it all, adjusted the
 light dust of this terraqueous
 globe, weighed the bulky moun-
 tains in scales, poised the pon-
 drous hill in a little balance.

13. Who hath di-
 rected the spirit of
 the Lord, or *being*
 his counsellor hath
 taught him?

14. With whom
 took he counsel, and
who instructed him;
 and taught him in
 the path of judgment,
 and taught him know-
 ledge, and shewed to
 him the way of un-
 derstanding?

It would be the height of folly 13, & 14
 and impiety, in finite and fallible
 creatures, to question the event
 because they cannot conceive how
 it should be effected, which the
 Almighty hath foretold: the vi-
 sible creation most plainly shews
 that he can perform that which
 the human understanding cannot
 extend to: by whose advice was
 he directed in that important
 enterprize? or, after he had pro-
 duced the materials, who fur-
 nished him with lines and rules
 how to model and frame, direct
 and govern with such accuracy
 of discernment, and perfection
 of understanding as his provi-
 dence discovers, and mocks all
 human foresight and penetration
 to resemble?

It

SECT. 51.

Isa. xl.

It is not possible that his supreme pleasure should be obstructed by any people or nation; for the largest connections or combinations, as opposite to, or competitors with him have no power at all; like the drop of a bucket he can easily dissipate them, or with the smallest breath of air blow them away as a speck of dust on the balance: islands, though invironed with waters, are no security; he takes them up and throws them at a distance, as the minutest objects overturns, or swallows them up as the meereft trifles.

16 So boundless is his greatness and ineffable his majesty and glory, that if a sacrifice was to be made worthy of his acceptance, and in any measure correspondent to his transcendent excellency, the unnumbered lowing herds and bleating flocks that graze on mount *Lebanon*, would afford but a very scanty and disproportionate victim; nor, if it could elsewhere be procured, would the cedars and all the other trees which grow on that spacious place, suffice to consume in a manner suitable to his

15. h Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

16. And *Lebanon* is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering.

h Behold, &c. i. e. a drop of water that sticks to the bucket, and as the small dust that remains in the scales.

his most exalted dignity, the immense oblation. SECT 51.

17. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity.

As to any want he has, or any benefit he can derive from them, all imaginable offerings that the largest assemblies can present, are altogether insignificant and the meekest vanities: the kingdoms and nations themselves, in comparison with his unrivalled excellency dwindle into nothing: there are no words to express how diminutive and absolutely despicable in a just estimate they all are, even lighter than a vapour, and more fleeting than a shadow.

Isa. xl.

17

CHAP. XL. SECT. LII.

No resemblance as to equality or comparison with the Supreme Being. Heathen idols contemptible: men's handy-work and the meekest delusions. Noble and sublime description of the Deity. The world his creature and charge, and his faithful servants secure of his regard and protection. 18 to the end.

ISA. xl. 18.

TO whom then will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

Isa. xl. 18.

THE peculiar people can never surely, if they know God, be diffident as to his power to rescue them from servitude to the mighty princes of idolatrous nations; for they themselves are but men, and their gods are no objects of reliance; what qualities

SECT. 52.

Isa. xl.

18

SECT. 52. ties or circumstances are there
for them absolutely to depend

Iſa. xl.

18 on, like the ſtable and unalterable attributes of this firſt cauſe, this independent and eternal Being? to whom beſides do all poſſible perfections appertain? they muſt be ſtupid, and to the laſt degree brutiſh, who think man can produce, or the univerſe diſplay any thing of ſimilitude that is equal or comparable to the immutable and immense *Jehovah*.

19 & 20

The artiſicer attempts this, but it is abſurd and impracticable; he melteth ſome ordinary metal in the furnace, and runneth it into a mould to be a graven or molten image: the goldſmith in order to decorate, overlays it with laminæ or plates of gold, and caſteth ſilver chains to faſten it, that it may ſtand upright and be in no danger of falling. This piece of real mummery and moſt ridiculous importance is deſigned to be an object of homage for the rich and great. The lower orders who cannot afford the expence, procure wood for their idol to be made of; for that end they chooſe out of the foreſt a tree that will endure the longeſt time without decaying, and employ a ſkilful hand to faſhion, and in the firmeſt manner to fix it, that it may not ſoon be ſhaken

19. The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldſmith ſpreadeth it over with gold, and caſteth ſilver chains.

20. He that is ſo impoveriſhed that he hath no oblation, chuſeth a tree that will not rot, he ſeeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image that ſhall not be moved.

ken, nor have occasion to be ^{SECT. 52.} taken down and repaired.

^{Isa. xl.}

^{21, & 22}

21. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath *it* not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22. *i* *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.

'Tis extremely difficult to account for such astonishing gross ignorance; are you really destitute of all intellectual faculties and capacities? Have you been precluded all the means of improvement and information; and no rational creature ever conversed with you? Are your times utterly unfurnished with any instruction from tradition, handed down through the successive generations of mankind from the first creation? Can your understanding discover nothing of the true God from his works, and the foundations of the earth, which are most firmly established? Surely you might know that which is the most obvious and certain of all truths, that there is a creator of infinite Majesty, a sovereign Lord and Ruler, who is possessed of all possible perfection and universal dominion, who hath heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footstool: how diminitively small the mortal inhabitants of this lower world must appear, even like so many grasshoppers in the circumference

i *He that sitteth*, &c. The original rendered *circle*, signifies a pair of compasses, and the passage should have been translated, *he that sitteth above the orb of the earth.*

SECT. 52. cumference of his exalted and
 { immense survey? who hath ex-
 Ifa. xl. tended the skies like a canopy
 21 & 22 for a covering; made them fill
 a large space as a pavilion or
 stately palace for himself to dwell
 in.

23 & 24

As to mankind in all their sub-
 ordinations, the peerless *Jebo-
 vah* claims an absolute jurisdic-
 tion, and with infinite ease con-
 trouls the most potent and seem-
 ly independent, into an utter in-
 capacity of effecting any thing
 of consequence; the legislative
 and the executive stations in life
 are under his supreme direction,
 and the sage counsellor with the
 solemn umpire of man's fate,
 how frequently has he mortified
 by defeating their schemes, or ren-
 dering quite abortive their most
 peremptory decisions. Compared
 to those beneath them, in their
 own high conceits they may seem
 to be as fixed and secure, as they
 are great and flourishing; but as
 a dry stock without any rooting,
 or as grass which has no depth
 of soil, they are soon blasted and
 withered: so it is with the most
 exalted and illustrious of human
 race, as chaff, the least breath of
 divine displeasure instantly dis-
 perses them; as the lightest stub-
 ble, the tempest of his fiercer
 indignation drives them quite
 away

23. That bringeth
 the princes to no-
 thing; he maketh the
 judges of the earth as
 vanity.

24. Yea, they shall
 not be planted, yea,
 they shall not be sown,
 yea, their stock shall
 not take root in the
 earth; and he shall
 also blow upon them,
 and they shall wither,
 and the whirl-wind
 shall take them away
 stubble.

Book of ISAIAH.

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away, so that all memorials of SECT. 52.
them for ever cease.

Isa. xl.

25 & 26

25. To whom then
will ye liken me, or
shall I be equal?
saith the holy one.

26. Lift up your
eyes on high, and
behold, who hath
created these *things*,
that bringeth out their
host by number: he
calleth them all by
names, by the great-
ness of his might,
for that *he is* strong
in power, not one
faileth.

The most distinguished and
magnificent are my productions,
by which of them then will you
form a resemblance of my supre-
macy and incomprehensible Ma-
jesty? or what qualities can be
found in them, that are ade-
quate to the wonderful effects of
my transcendent and incommu-
nicable attributes? saith the self-
existent and peerless Jehovah, do
you, as becomes intelligent crea-
tures, made with erect forms,
raise your admiring eyes from
grovelling on earth and dust, to
survey the celestial orbs, with the
regular order and most perfect
harmony amongst the glorious
luminaries that adorn them:
consider what unerring wisdom
and boundless power he must be
possessed of, who originally cal-
led them out of nothing; who
as numbering or mustering the
vast army, disposeth them in
the most grand array, and as in-
timately acquainted with every
individual, calleth them all by
their names: by the unsearcha-
ble greatness of his understand-
ing and strength, he leads every
company, not one is wanting;
not one unprepared in his pro-
per station to perform that which

SECT. 52. in his supreme pleasure he shall
 { appoint him.

Isa. xl.
 27 & 28

When you are accustomed to such contemplations, O ye posterity of *Jacob* and children of *Israel*, how can you give way to the following gloomy and desponding sentiments and expressions: we rely on a God, who does not observe or regard our misery: he has not skill to form a plan for our deliverance, or not power to execute it in the redress of our grievances, therefore we have no hope. Have you no knowledge from the exercise of your own natural faculties, who the only true God is? Have no reports ever come to your ears what attributes he is possessed of? that he changeth not, therefore is both as able and willing as ever to do great and wonderful things for his people? that though he is incessantly employed in the important concern of an universal providence, yet he fainteth not with anxious care? is not fatigued with arduous labour, nor is to be fathomed in the boundless extent of his understanding, for directing and governing whatever he hath produced.

29, 30, It is utterly absurd and impossible that his uncreated, immutable, and immense perfections should

27. Why sayest thou, O *Jacob*, and speakest, O *Israel*, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God.

28. Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

29. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no

no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.

31. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

should fail, who gives such perpetual displays of them in their support to the weakest and frailest of his intelligent offspring, and revival to their languishing spirits under the severest trials and afflictions: even vigorous and enterprizing youths are sometimes liable to great depressions, and failures of strength and vivacity: the most sanguine themselves, who doubt not to accomplish whatever they shall undertake, fall and die in their hazardous and difficult attempts: whereas they who regularly proceed in the discharge of their certain duty, and calmly resign themselves to the Almighty, as to the time and means of accomplishing his promises: though they may sometimes wait long and be ready to faint, by their constant meditations shall find their strength to be renewed; and by their unshaken confidence their spirits to be raised to such a degree of fortitude and magnanimity, as shall suppress their fears and set them above the greatest danger: no discouragement in their circumstances, nor delays of relief shall hinder, but they shall continue in their course, persevere to the end, run the race, and win the prize.

SECT. 52.
Isa. xl.
29, 30, &
31

CHAP. XLI. SECT. LIII.

Deliverance farther ascertained to the Jews. Power of heathens or their idols, no just ground of fear. Wonders in ancient times performed for Abraham and his posterity. Vengeance in due season to be taken on the enemies and cruel persecutors of God's people. 1—17.

ISA. xli. 1.

SECT. 53. **T**TRUE religion solicits universal examination, a fair state is all that is necessary to discover its preference above all false ones, and idolatrous profanations: to encourage, therefore, a manly free enquiry, the ever-living God hath spoken as follows; Give the proper attention of a profound silence, O ye islands, that you may form a just judgment, in the most important controversy betwixt my holy name and all that pretend to rival me: let the advocates for heathen superstition, range in due order, and give the utmost strength to all their arguments; with a decent freedom let them raise objections and come into the closest debate, to support, if they can, their cause.

² How little is to be feared from them, or can be advanced in favour of pagan, local or tutelary

ISA. xli. 1.

KEEP silence before me, O islands, and let the people renew their strength. Let them come near, then let them speak; let us come near together to judgment.

² Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the

the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.

tetary divinities, is evident from ^{SECT. 53.} a remarkable instance, of which ^{Isa. xli.} your history contains authentic ² memoirs; that is, your illustrious ancestor, and my faithful servant *Abraham*; who was it, that from the strongest convictions of reason, excited that good and righteous man to divest himself of early prejudice, and most sincerely detest the absurd notions and corrupt customs of his idolatrous situation in *Ur* of the *Chaldees*: at his Maker's command to forsake his native country and nearest kindred, most cheerfully also follow whithersoever he should lead him. What else further animated him to attack and overcome the four kings who had plundered *Sodom*? They could no more stand their ground against his sword and bow, than the lightest dust or driest stubble can before the rising wind, the driving tempest.

3. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.

Without any considerable delay ³ of time, he improved the victory, pursued the advantage he had gained, and through remote countries, in unfrequented ways, continued to harass the enemy.

4. Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord the first,

Who hath so regulated af- ⁴ fairs, and directed the changing circumstances of the successive generations of this celebrated patriarch

SECT. 53.
Isa. xli.

patriarch, as from their small beginning to render them a great and powerful nation. It was not any idol god, that in their several periods hath performed for them such wonderful mercies and deliverances: it is I, the LORD JEHOVAH, who am self-originate, and antecedent to all other beings; who preside over them, and shall continue to be the same unaltered and eternal Deity, should they drop into the dust of annihilation.

5 & 6 Surrounding nations were amazed and affrighted with the astonishing displays of divine omnipotence and benevolence, that distinguished the children of *Israel*: to the remotest borders of the world, unless their minds were folded up against all the means of a rational conviction, they must be alarmed and fully satisfied, that their idols were the meekest vanities, and *Israel*'s God the only living and true one; they actually were thus folded up; and they combined together to animate one another, in persevering to establish false religion, and practice the grossest idolatry.

7. The emoluments raised their most eager desires, and the beneficial commerce carried on in the formation of new gods; thus the

first, and with the last, I am he.

5. The isles saw it and feared, the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near and came.

6. They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, be of good courage.

7. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheneth with the hammer him that smote

smote the anvil, saying, it is ready for the fodering: and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved.

the carpenter urged forward the goldsmith to make ready the gold or silver plates with which the idol was to be over-laid, and bring them that the divine work might be finished, against the festival for which it was intended: he who polished the plate encouraged him who wrought at the forge; saying, it is now sufficiently beaten out at the anvil, the pieces may be joined with the foder which is good; and the work, having all the perfection given it that is possible, be fastened with nails, and stand firm and immoveable.

SECT 53.

Isa. xli.

8. But thou *Israel* art my servant, *Jacob* whom I have chosen, the seed of *Abraham*, my friend.

Altogether different is your case, and your dependance not so precarious and uncertain, O ye children of *Israel*, if you walk in the steps of your great progenitor, and behave yourselves to my laws with the same dutiful and humble obedience, that the head of the family shewed: doubt not, if you act with equal sincerity as he did, I will be as much your protector and benefactor as ever I was his.

9. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

You whom, in the loins of, that eminent man, I have taken out of the land of *Chaldea* to be my peculiar people: preferring you before families that I might have chosen from great and powerful nations; and in express

SECT. 53. words declaring, You are to perform to me solemnities of worship and service, agreeable to certain laws I have enacted for that purpose: I have selected, and though you have oftentimes highly provoked me, have never utterly abandoned and forsaken you.

Ma. xli.

10 You would be unworthy of the favour of my animating presence, if any fears or dangers much affected you: I do insist upon it, that no alarms throw you into disorder; there can be no occasion, so long as I, who possess all possible perfection, am your God and defender: in a condition of the extremest weakness, you may derive from these sentiments all necessary strength and vigour, and support under the heaviest afflictions: do not doubt but I will preserve and maintain you, till the iniquities of your enemies have fully ripened them for the reaper's hand; and it be perfectly fitting that mercy should no longer spare, but justice strike, and the right hand of my omnipotence be displayed in your deliverance and their overthrow.

11 The numbers nor power, pride nor wrath of your adversaries need not concern you; for they cannot hinder, but they shall

10. Fear thou not, for *I am* with thee, be not dismayed, for *I am* thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

11. Behold, all *they that* were incensed against thee shall be ashamed, and confounded: *they* shall

be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish.

12. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them; even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

13. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee.

14. Fear not, thou worm Jacob: and ye men of *Israel* I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy One of *Israel*.

meet with an entire defeat, be ^{SECT. 53.} thrown into the utmost disorder ^{Isa. xli.} and confusion. With whatever ^{11, 12, &} fury and impetuosity they may ¹³ rush to the onset, expecting to be your lords and masters, yet as destitute of all strength or vigour, they shall soon be repulsed and give way, fall and die. Upon a diligent enquiry what is become of them, you shall find them in a most despicable condition, unable again to rally, or give further trouble. This must necessarily be the event, since I the LORD your God have undertaken your support: requiring you to dismiss your fears, and with my strength to succour, let your hearts be full of courage.

Your state at present may be ¹⁴ exceeding mean and wretched; nor, as to all human probability likely in a short time to be better; your numbers reduced, your vigour impaired, and the iron hand of a proud and tyrannical oppression, to have humbled, as throwing you poor mortals down to the earth, and crushing you like so many reptiles in the dust; yet relief shall be provided, saith the Lord of the whole creation, and the JEHOVAH of *Israel*.

My

SECT. 53.

Hav. xli.

15 & 16

My interposition may be properly represented by the following emblem, and as straw is bruised by a new threshing instrument, with strong and sharp teeth, so will I invigorate and arm you, that you shall easily vanquish your enemies: were they girded with strength like the compact mountains, your heavy strokes shall separate, and crumble them to atoms; or exalted as the towering hills, they shall fall in pieces, or fly away like dust or chaff: you shall subdue and disperse them; as the fan divides the corn from the chaff, the wind carries it away, and the whirlwind scatters it to all parts, so signal and compleat shall be your victories: at the same time you are thankfully to acknowledge the author of them: rejoice, triumph, glory in celebrating the praises of your God and Saviour.

15. Behold I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

16. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord; and shalt glory in the holy One of *Israel*.

CHAP. XLI. SECT. LIV.

Provision made for supplying the wants of the Israelites, their returns of gratitude expected. Heavens challenged to support the divinity of their idols: predictions necessary for this end. Great variety of them justly ascribed to the true God. Chaldeans to punish the Jews for their sins: Medes and Persians to deliver them. Idols from the silence of their votaries concluded to be of no value: and homage paid them futile and vain.

ISA. xli. 17, 18, 19.

WHEN the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

18. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry lands springs of water.

19. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, ^k the shittah-tree, and

Isa. xli. 17, 18, & 19.

VICISSITUDES and ^{SECT 54.} changes are frequently ^{Isa. xli.} requisite for imperfect mortals, ^{17, 18, &} in this state of probation: the ¹⁹ peculiar people will sometimes have great occasion for a stricter discipline than ordinary, and the trial of affliction; but when they shall comport with the views of these allotments, and pour forth humble and penitent supplications: I, saith a most gracious and merciful God, will manifest that I hear and have not forsaken them. I will open rivers for quenching their thirst, in the high

^k *The shittah-tree.* In some places this is rendered the box-tree and the massick-tree, Mic. vi. 5. elsewhere incorruptible wood. It is questionable whether the box-tree grew in the deserts of Arabia, or on mount Libanus. Pliny says it commonly flourishes in cold ground: and there being now no other tree in all the

SECT. 54. ^{Isa. xli.} high places of the earth, and in the midst of valleys cause fountains to flow: convert the barren desert into a pool, and make sandy dry land abound with water: for their shelter also I will plant in the wilderness pleasant and shady trees; the strongest cedars, the scented myrtles, the acacia, and the oil-trees, with the fruit of which their anointed faces shine: the fir-tree, the pine and the box-tree also shall grow and flourish in the poorest soil.

20 All with this intention, that their rational faculties may be duly exercised on these extraordinary events, and most certain effects of a designing cause, an Almighty, and most wise superintendent and director; that they may be convinced 'tis the Lord *Jehovah*, whose power comprehends in it all the possibilities of action, and that no other could perform what he hath done.

21 Having endeavoured by his prophet, to render his people sensible, what favours they had received,

and the myrtle, and the oil-tree: I will set in the desert the fir-tree and the pine, and the box-tree together.

20. That they may see and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy One of *Israel* hath created it.

21. ¹ Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the king of *Jacob*.

the desert of *Arabia* but the *acacia*, from which the *Arabians* take the *gum*, which we call *gum Arabic*, as *Belou*, who travelled that country relates, it is most probable that tree. *Plin. Nat. Hist.* l. xvi. c. 16, *Pelen. Observ.* l. ii. ch. 56, 60.

¹ Produced, &c. Mankind were never so totally and universally divested of reason, but in so material a point as a claim to divinity,

received, and what hopes they might entertain from the protection of Providence; the everlasting Potentate resumes his discourse as follows with the heathens: Let us hear in a fair state of the case, what you have to advance for your idols; what you can argue and demonstrate to shew your safety and wisdom in trusting to them: the hazards and simplicity of the *Israelites* in relying on that invisible and eternal Deity, who hath always preserved and defended them.

Doubt not, but the trial will²² be a most impartial one, and the sovereign test, from events corresponding with predictions, such as cannot deceive you; let them be produced then to the open view of the public, and foretell, as the Omniscient *JEHOVAH* hath frequently

22. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things to come.

divinity, they required for its support some display of an extraordinary knowledge or exertion of Almighty power. Ancient oracles were to be produced, that a judgment might be formed by correspondent events, whether they were accomplished: they would not be thought so absurd, if there was not the shadow of reason for doing it, to pay them homage. Further, whatever difference there might be between some miracles and others as to grandeur, the Old Testament represents all miracles, whether of knowledge or power, as proofs that the God of *Israel* was *Jehovah*. *Isai.* xlii. 8 and 9. xliii. 9, 13. xlv. 8. xlv. 18, 21, and 22. xlv. 9 and 10. xlviii. 3. *Jer.* x. 5, 16, *Dan.* ii. 11, 27, 28, 29, 47. In these passages, revealing secrets, foretelling future events, delivering and saving, and the doing either good or evil in a supernatural manner, are not only asserted as the sole prerogatives of the true God, but urged as decisive proofs of Deity. *Mr. Farm. on Mir.* p. 237, 350.

SECT. 54. frequently done for the benefit
 of his people, things future and
 contingent; the order likewise
 or regular series of events: what
 shall immediately happen, that
 the matter may speedily be
 brought to a crisis; and that we
 may diligently attend to form
 proper judgments, and be prepar-
 ed to avoid the evil that shall be
 in it, or make the greatest advan-
 tage of the good, or let them
 precisely and circumstantially de-
 clare matters that are to exist at
 a greater distance.

23 No further evidence is desired,
 there can be no stronger, O ye
 idols, that ye are really Gods,
 than your predictions of future
 matters, in terms that are per-
 fectly clear of all ambiguity or
 obscurity; nor will we hesitate a
 moment when the event is an-
 swerable, to acknowledge your
 divinity. Further you may pre-
 tend to Omnipotence, that præ-
 rogative

23. Shew the things
 that are to come here-
 after, that we may
 know that *m* ye are
 gods: yea, do good,
 or do evil, that we
 may be dismayed,
 and behold it toge-
 ther.

m Ye are gods, &c. *Miracles*, as has been intimated in the
 note just preceding, and as *Abarbinel* expresses it, are the sole
 work of God himself; he never intrusted any of his creatures
 with this power: whenever his messengers, prophets, or apos-
 tles desired to produce such effects, they addressed him as the
 operative cause. Future events also were never foretold but
 by the Omniscient Being. What is expected of idols, of ora-
 cles, or of the devil himself informing them, is all imposture
 and delusion: probable conjecture; or it is couched in such am-
 biguous terms, that whatever the event was, they might be un-
 derstood truly to have foretold it.

rogative of the Supreme Being, ^{SECT. 54.}
and actually to save or destroy, ^{Isa. xli.}
wound or heal, kill or make ²³
alive; and if these pretensions
were supported, our astonish-
ment would be increased, and
our applause united and entire.

24. n Behold ye
are of nothing, and
your work of nought:
an abomination is he
that chooseth you.

As both these are absolutely ²⁴
impossible, you may expect, O
ye dumb, and deaf, and dead,
statues and images to be treated
with the utmost disdain; triumph
and insult as meer nothings and
of no manner of value; owing
your very existence to the de-
praved imagination of your infa-
tuated votaries. The fashion
you are made in, by the forming
hand of the artist, hath nothing
truly divine in it: you have
neither prescience to foretell, nor
power to effect any thing at all;
and

n Behold, &c. The marginal reading is, *Behold ye are worse than nothing*, i. e. not only *elilim nullities*, or that have no virtue, the meekest vanities, but the cause of much wickedness: *and your work worse than of a viper*, i. e. as some understand, originated from the devil, and doing infinite mischief to those that worship you. Thus those who practised the arts of divination are branded as liars, and the Jews warned against expecting from them instruction or information. *Jer. x. 23, 8. Isai. xli. 25.* it is perpetually inculcated upon them, that they were only imaginary beings, who had no existence, or no degree of power over mankind. *Jer. x. 5.* Be not afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good. In the *English translation*, they are rendered *devils*. *Deut. xxxii. 17, 21. Psal. cvi. 30, 37. Gen. xxxv. 24.* *Schedim* signifies *destroyers*, who delighted in the blood and sacrifice of the human species. *Psal. cvi. 28.* They were great warriors who, in their mortal state, delighted in the slaughter of the human race. *Mr. Farm. or Mir. 237, 249, 350, 370:*

SECT. 54. and you cannot but be greatly
 } prejudicial and baleful to him
 Isa. xli. } who is so utterly void of under-
 24 } standing, as to make you the ob-
 } ject of his devotion or his de-
 } pendance.

25 To throw an entire confusion
 on all such absurdities, I for-
 merly produced one from a nor-
 thern extraction, who nobly
 triumphed over all the strongest
 prejudices of an heathen educa-
 tion, and was eminent for a ra-
 tional and unfeigned virtue and
 piety; he came from the north-
 east, honourably distinguished
 himself by confessing my name,
 and in his posterity hath gained
 many easy victories over mighty
 princes; subduing them to his
 pleasure, as the potter-moulds
 his clay, as he judges most proper.

26 Who among the great and
 rabble multitude of your idol
 gods, hath foretold things to
 come from their first beginning,
 or long before they existed? as
 in a great variety of instances I
 have done, that we may know
 whether they happened accord-
 ing to his foreknowledge; there-
 fore whether he be a god as he
 pretended; who before time had
 its being and measures, uttered
 predictions in a right manner,
 and that were accomplished in
 the event, that we may espouse
 and

25. I have raised
 up *one* from the north,
 and he shall come
 from the rising of the
 sun shall he call upon
 my name, and he
 shall come upon
 princes as *upon* mor-
 ter, and as the potter
 treadeth clay.

26. Who hath de-
 clared from the be-
 ginning, that we may
 know? and before
 time that we may say
he is righteous? yea,
there is none that
 sheweth, yea, there
 is none that declareth,
 yea, *there is none* that
 heareth your words.

27.
 say to
 beho
 will
 one
 good

28.
 and th
 even
 and the
 fellow
 Vo

and vindicate his claim to Deity ? SECT. 54.
 there is not one besides myself ^{Isa. xli.}
 that ever did or can foretel what ²⁶
 shall be hereafter : there is nei-
 ther a priest nor prophet whom
 the idols have inspired, that can
 declare what shall come to pass
 in future days ; there is no one
 that can try or hear any such ar-
 ticle of intelligence from you,
 nor from any person to whom
 you have communicated it ; for
 ye are all dumb Gods, and never
 once opened your lips so as to
 speak a single word.

27. The first *shall*
say to Zion, Behold,
 behold them, and I
 will give to Jerusalem
 one that bringeth
 good tidings.

I the Lord JEHOVAH, who ²⁷
 am absolutely the first, previous
 to all other beings, and inde-
 pendent of them all, who have
 supported my pretensions to
 Deity by prophecies, an have
 challenged the heathen idols to
 do the like ; shall say to *Zion*
 for her consolation, behold my
 people, whom you thought lost
 in their dispersions and captivi-
 ties restored ; and I will ap-
 point to them a prophet or mes-
 senger, who shall bring them
 the pleasing and joyful news of
 their speedy return to their na-
 tive country ; and of several
 other desirable events and blef-
 sings.

28. For I beheld,
 and *there was* no man,
 even amongst them,
 and *there was* no coun-
 sellor, that when I
 VOL. II. ask-

As to pagan idols and their ²⁸
 worshippers, the affair is de-
 cisively settled ; there is no man
 who will undertake to prove
 their

SECT. 54. their divinity ; they have given
 up this point separately ; nei-
 ther have they assembled and
 consulted together to any pur-
 pose, so as to answer my chal-
 lenges.

asked of them could
 answer a word.

29 There is plainly no reliance to
 be fixed on them ; their votaries
 act a most foolish and ridiculous
 part : the lifeless forms they be-
 stow so much pains and expence
 to make, to decorate and to please,
 are instances of lost labour : no
 benefit can do it, but unspeak-
 able mischief and danger arise
 from them.

29. Behold, they
 are all vanity, their
 works are nothing ;
 their molten images
 are wind and confu-
 sion.

CHAP. XLII. SECT. LV.

A servant of eminent distinction to be dispatched and supported in an extraordinary embassy. His mild and gentle manner of conducting it, yet his determinate resolution to answer its important intentions. Signal advantage to be received from him ; and a sincere gratitude reasonably expected. 1.—13.

Isa. xlii. 1.

SECT. 55. Further, to demonstrate my-
 self to be the only living
 and true God, in opposition to
 all heathen idols and vanities, I
 will foretel, saith the LORD JE-
 HOVAH, several important events,
 attended with extraordinary cir-
 cumstances, and worthy of a
 most diligent attention. I will
 dispatch one upon an embassy to
 my people, who serves me in
 the

Isa. xlii. 1.

BEHOLD my
 servant whom
 I uphold, mine elect
 in whom my soul de-
 lighteth ; I have put
 my spirit upon him :
 he shall bring forth
 judgment to the Gen-
 tiles.

the perfect obedience of my laws, ^{SECT. 55.}
and will support him under all ^{Isa. xlii.}
imaginable difficulties and discouragements: the dignity of
his appointment is transcendent-
ly great; my design is of a very
ancient date; and the interest I
take in his success and happiness most affectionate and entire:
I will abundantly furnish him
with the richest spiritual endow-
ments, to understand and deter-
mine what is equal and right;
heathen nations, as well as the
children of *Israel*, shall be the
voluntary subjects of his most
righteous government.

2. He shall not cry,
nor lift up, nor cause
his voice to be heard
in the street.

As to the manner of his pro-
cedure in it, it shall be suitable
to the affair he engages in: he
shall not appear in the dazzling
robes of secular pomp and great-
ness, nor contend with the flam-
ing sword of martial ardour and
violence: he shall not elevate
his voice in a clamorous and
overbearing manner, nor shall
the streets resound, upon his
standard being erected, with loud
huzzas and turbulent alarms.

3. A bruised reed o
shall he not break;
and the smoking flax
shall he not quench:
he shall bring forth
judgment unto truth.

His administration shall be
conducted with such caution and
circumspection, clemency and
most condescending tenderness
of mercy, that he shall not mor-
tify the most imperfect of cha-
racters, not break a bruised reed,
or shattered cane, which can

SECT. 55. bear no great force or weight but

Isa. xlii. they are snapt asunder : nor extinguish the smoaking flax, or feeble wick of a new-lighted lamp ; but he shall direct and govern conformably to rules of the most perfect reason and equity, till his most just cause of truth and virtue prevail and triumph over all opposition.

4 No difficulties or discouragements, as to labour or suffering, shall be able to restrain his most determinate resolution ; nor in the least abate the vigour of his endeavours to accomplish his purpose, and compleat the reformation of mankind ; that justice, truth, and fidelity may every where gain the ascendant :
and

4. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth ; and the isles shall wait for his law.

o *A bruised reed*, &c. Proverbial expressions to denote a most amiable mild character, equal and gentle administration : not unlike the apothegm of the *Spanish Jews*, who say, that if such a one was to walk over a pavement of eggs, he would not break them.

p *Fail*. The radix signifies to be abated, repressed, dulled, blunted ; in the foregoing verse it is applied to the wick of a candle, which burns but dimly. Here to lowness or faintness of spirit, when the vigour of the mind is enervated, relaxed, or exhausted. To dimness of sight, *Gen. xxvii. 1*. The next verse contains a noble and sublime description of the Deity ; and that which follows a most just and accurate account of his dispensations. Every thing is founded in reason, dictated by eternal equity ; the *Messiah's* reign admirably displayed this, and his laws which are certain transcripts from the divine moral attributes : the seventh is quoted *Acts xxvi. 18*. and light and darkness are well-known figures of Speech in the *Hebrew* language, to denote the different states of prosperity and adversity. *God the Lord*, *Ainsworth* and others are of opinion, that *Jehovah* is a participle of *Hajah* in *Piel*, or as *L'Clerc* thinks, in *Hiphil*, and that it not only signifies to be, but to cause to be.

and heathens, in the remotest or ^{SECT 55.} obscurest parts of the earth, shall ^{Ifa. xlii.} express longing desires to come ⁴ under the regulation of his laws.

5. Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it, he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.

6. I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.

Thus hath the Supreme Being ^{5 & 6} and absolute Lord of the universe declared; he from whom the exalted heavens originated, and who extended them to that large circumference in which you behold their amazing beauty and splendour: he who diffused to its present vast compass, this spacious earth, with its produce of pasturage, trees, and herbs, and multitudes of animals that it maintains: he who giveth life and breath to its human inhabitants; and understanding, liberty, and moral agency to them who are placed there as in a state of trial and probation: O my servant, as certainly as if I had given it thee already, shalt thou have my commission or destination, conformable to my promise, and in a way that is most just and equal, to execute this important office: in performing it be assured of my support and conduct, and that, as my messenger or mediator, thou shalt renew and confirm my covenant with the people of *Israel*; and enlighten the understanding, and revive the

SECT. 55. the drooping hearts of benighted
heathens.

Isa. xlii.

7 A labour it shall be, alike
useful and beneficial, as suddenly
restoring sight to them who
had long lamented in lonesome
darkness the loss of this invaluable
blessing: liberty and prosperity
to those who groaned under the
intolerable oppression of tyrannical
rule: or deliverance to prisoners
who had languished in the tedious
bondage of a cruel confinement,
and the gloomy cells of a most
disagreeable and dark dungeon.

8 & 9 This most acceptable work
shall certainly be performed, for
I have foretold it, who have my
existence and attributes of myself;
and from whom all other beings
are derived: who am the great
JEHOVAH. I have made myself
known to my people by this
significant name, and am thereby
illustriously distinguished from
all false gods: the praise of being
the only true One, the glory of
punctually accomplishing whatever
I predict; are what I will not
reign to idols, nor be rivalled in
my eternal and incommunicable
attributes, by those spurious
divinities, those despi-

7. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

8. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

9. Behold the former things are come to pass; and new things do I declare, before they spring forth I tell you of them.

6. Declare, the radix signifies to stand upon a raised situation, directly before me, in clear and open view. To make manifest and known, to divulge, to explain things secret, abstruse, and obscure.

despicable molten images. The ^{SECT 55.} several affairs which from time to time, I have long before they ^{Isa. xlii.} happened discovered, have been all fulfilled in their respective seasons; and future ones do I declare, of my people's deliverance and the overthrow of their enemies; before there is any probable sign of them, which shall as certainly be accomplished, as those things I foretold, were in former ages.

10. Sing unto the Lord a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth: ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein: the isles and the inhabitants thereof.

Though at some distance, as ¹⁰ to the space of time, you who hear of these things, and are so greatly interested in them; in order to celebrate the new and wonderful work, do you prepare a new and most thankful song: and confess God's power and majesty, his goodness and mercy, from the remotest parts of the earth: do the same all ye mariners and merchants that dwell in the islands of the sea; you, whose habitations are surrounded with the watery element, join the concert!

11. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their* voice, the villages *that* Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing; let them shout from the top of the mountains.

Let barbarians and those *Edomites* who reside in towns of the wilderness by the eastern sea, they will have occasion: lift up their voices in songs of thanksgiving: the villages of *Arabia Petrea*, that the descendants of *Kedar* the son of *Ismael* inhabit; those

SECT. 55. those who dwell in rocky *Petra*,
 { let them tune their voices; and
 Isa. xlii. 11 let them who dwell in mountain-
 ous countries, from the tops of
 them issue forth their acclama-
 tions, to the eternal honour of
 the most high God.

12 From an impressivè sense of
 such signal and distinguishing
 favours, let them in the best
 manner they are capable, express
 their unfeigned gratitude; and
 give all the glory to the Almighty,
 as their undoubted author:
 his hand to have been active,
 and the praise due to him, in the
 islands of the sea.

12. Let them give
 glory unto the Lord,
 and declare his praise
 in the islands.

CHAP. XLII.

SECT. LVI.

*The displeasure of the Almighty, after great patience,
 exceeding severe; or abuse of long forbearance terribly
 resented. Heathens punished. Israelites expostulated
 with: good and happiness intended them, if they
 would receive admonition. 13 to the end.*

ISA. xlii. 13.

13 FROM his dispensations, and
 the Lord's great long-suf-
 fering as to chastizing their cru-
 el oppressors, it might be thought
 that he had withdrawn his affec-
 tion and regard from his people,
 and was not offended with their
 enemies: the contrary shall be
 shewed in due season: as a
 mighty

ISA. xlii. 13.

THE LORD shall
 go forth as a
 mighty man, he shall
 stir up jealousy like
 a man of war: he
 shall cry; yea, roar;
 he shall prevail a-
 gainst his enemies.

mighty man issues from his pavilion all in armour, his attributes shall be conspicuous: as a fire is stirred or blown up that it burns with violence, his anger shall rage: as a military man gives the cry or alarm for engaging, so as to manifest that his fiercest wrath is roused, he shall as it were shout: as the ravenous lion roars when he seizes his prey, he shall cause his voice of indignation to be heard, and shall speedily subdue all that obstinately oppose him.

SECT. 56.

Isa. xlii.

13

14. I have long time holden my peace, I have been still and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman, I will destroy and devour at once.

I could not be insensible, faith the Omniscient Being, of my people's most desolate state: though a long course of forbearance shews, that I have in silence mourned it; calmed the inward tempest of my wrath, and suppressed, while it could consistently be done, my undoubted feelings for their miseries: matters are now come to an extremity, and I must avenge: like a woman in travailing pains, she cries not out till they become intolerable, that nature can endure no longer; then the more she has endeavoured to suppress them, with greater violence will they break forth and hasten the birth: so ardent my zeal to deliver my captive sons: as an hungry beast devours, as soon as he has killed his

his

SECT. 56. his prey, so quick a work of
compleat destruction, will I
Iſa. xlii. make of their enemies.

15 The unspeakable calamity of a most horrid and entire desolation, shall greatly affect both man and beast: it shall prevail on the mountains and hills; and the plain's late verdant herbage shall be sickened, and withered to the very roots; the rivers which they so much relied on, as their strength and riches, shall be drained of water, so as to appear like islands; and their pools and lakes shall be altogether exhausted and dry.

16 And as to the poor captives, harrowed up, alas, with grief and pain, and utterly in the dark, from any appearances, when their miseries shall end; I will interpose, saith the Lord, and conduct them through unknown ways and paths, that they never before travelled to the land of their nativity: change a very afflicted and calamitous state, into a most agreeable and desirable one; and will further, as it were strew with roses, and render that course easy and pleasant, that was cragged and

15. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs, and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

16. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them and not forsake them.

* *Rivers*, a probable allusion to the great river *Euphrates*, which *Cyrus*, by certain drains, rendered fordable or passable for his army, when he took *Babylon*.

and thorny : however unlikely ^{SECT. 56.}
and almost impossible this may ^{Isa. xlii.}
seem, I the Almighty will take ¹⁶
care to effect it ; and though
my people, from their long and
tedious servitude, may look as
if they were forgotten and aban-
doned : they really are not, nor
will I leave till I have returned
them safe to their own country.

17. they shall be
turned back, they
shall be greatly a-
shamed that trust in
graven images, that
say to the molten
images, ye are our
gods.

In all the changes of states ¹⁷
and revolutions of kingdoms it
may be expected, and shall hap-
pen remarkably at the conjunc-
ture when the children of Israel
shall be redeemed, in what dis-
order and confusion idolaters are
with their disappointed hopes ;
how despicable, compared with
the great JEHOVAH, their graven
and their molten images, the
objects of their homage who
cannot save them in danger, nor
screen them from his avenging
hand.

18. Hear ye deaf,
and look ye blind,
that ye may see.

19. Who is blind
but my servant ? or
deaf as my messenger
that I sent ? who is
blind as he that is per-
fect, and blind as
the Lord's servant.

You heathens are inexcusable, ¹⁸
with reason for your guide, and
the heavens for your instructors,
in your gross absurdities and abo-
minations : but O ye *Jews*, at-
tend and consider, whoever
shewed less knowledge in mat-
ters wherein you are infinitely
concerned than you yourselves
have

* Turned back. The original signifies, to go the wrong or
backward way, with regard to hopes, to be greatly disappointed.

SECT. 56. have done, or were more un-
 thinking and foolish: priests
 Isa. xlii. and Levites who desire to be
 18 & 19 accounted lights for others, and
 more perfect in knowledge; how
 dim-sighted, how greatly be-
 wildered those who glory in
 their superior knowledge and
 abilities, as employed in my
 more immediate homage and sa-
 cred service.

20 You may indeed behold with
 your bodily eyes, many objects
 that you are greatly and lastingly
 interested, to be acquainted with;
 but not be duly affected, impres-
 sed, and improved by them:
 open your ears likewise but not
 hear to any purpose, so that the
 understanding may be convinced,
 conscience awakened, and the
 heart amended; matters of the
 utmost moment may be consi-
 dered only as common and tri-
 vial affairs.

21 It is peculiarly acceptable to
 the great and good Maker and
 Lawgiver, that his people, for
 the sake of his righteousness and
 faithfulness, and that they may
 inherit the promises, would obey
 his commands: he will demon-
 strate perfect equity, reasonable-
 ness, and goodness of his laws,
 by bountifully rewarding those
 who duly esteem and observe
 them; and at a proper season,
 punish-

20. Seeing many
 things, but thou ob-
 servest not; opening
 the ears, but he hear-
 eth not.

21. The Lord is
 well pleased for his
 righteousness sake,
 he will magnify the
 law and make it ho-
 nourable.

punishing them who neglect and contemptuously cast those cords ^{SECT. 56.} behind their backs. ^{Isa. xlii.}

22. But this is a people robbed and spoiled, *they are* all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses: they are for a prey and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none faith, restore.

But notwithstanding that, the ²² true measures of life and happiness have been laid before and argued upon them; this unthinking generation will not observe them; nor please a most just and holy God, and promote their own interest: therefore, they in a manner chuse to be, and I plainly foresee shall be robbed and spoiled; being apprehended by their enemies, they shall be closely confined in caves and holes; hidden from the light, and thrust down into lonesome and gloomy prisons; whoever pleases may seize them as his prey, and there is none to rescue; as common plunder, and no one will undertake to relieve them.

23. Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear for the time to come?

24. Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his law.

Who among you will impartially examine and reflect in these matters, so as to repent and amend, and prevent such miseries; nay, when they shall befall you, who will recollect what was threatened, blame himself that he had not taken warning, and become more wise and considerate for the future. Never was a more certain truth spoken, if you were only open to conviction, than this; that it was the Lord

SECT. 56. Lord your God, who hath
 brought upon you a succession
 of inhuman, cruel enemies, to
 correct your follies, and punish
 your sins; you suffer, because
 you have offended the Supreme
 Majesty, would not regularly
 proceed in that course of duty
 and virtue he had plainly pre-
 scribed you, nor obey his laws
 of everlasting righteousness.

Isa. xlii.
 23, & 24

25 On the sole account of your
 obstinate and incorrigible disobe-
 dience, will you be reduced to
 the greatest distresses; the threat-
 ning was not regarded, therefore
 it is most dreadfully executed:
 as clouds suddenly breaking, or
 the heaviest storms falling, ac-
 companied with claps of thun-
 der; as the rage of battle, such
 shall be the invasion and destruc-
 tion of your country: your city
 and temple will be set on fire,
 yet, you will seem no more af-
 fected than if you knew it not;
 they shall burn away with the
 utmost fury, yet you will not
 consider so as to be reclaimed
 from your errors and miscar-
 riages.

25. therefore he
 hath poured upon
 him the fury of his
 anger, and the
 strength of battle,
 and it hath set him
 on fire round about,
 yet he knew not, and
 it burned him; yet
 he laid it not to
 heart.

CHAP. XLIII. SECT. LVII.

The Jews not to be utterly destroyed: to be ransomed with the substitutes of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba; and gathered from their dispersions. Heathens challenged to vindicate the character and divinity of their idols. Testimony mentioned to the true Deity of the Lord Jehovah. His predictions accomplished. I. 14.

ISA. xliii. I.

BUT now thus saith the LORD that created thee O Jacob, and he that formed thee O Israel, fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

ISA. xliii. I.

THERE will be some of ^{SECT. 57.} that unhappy temper, to ^{Isa. xliii.} continue hardened and impenitent, under the afflicting hand of divine providence; but others will lay this to heart, and truly answer its important intentions. To these last, saith the Lord, the author, O *Jacob*, of thine existence, and former of thy people into a body politic, let no anxious corroding fears or cares distress your minds. I have frequently delivered you, when your condition was deplorable and hopeless as it is at present: this may inspire you with fortitude and magnanimity; especially as you may consider yourselves as my property, greatly in my favour, and eminently distinguished with privileges from all the world besides.

It

SECT. 57.

Isa. xliii.

It makes no manner of differences to my arm of Omnipotence, how desperate your dangers are, and great your distress: with my presence to preserve, you may venture to pass through the deepest waters, and are perfectly safe; the most rapid streams or roaring torrents of large rivers, shall not be able to overwhelm or carry you down: when you walk through the hottest embers of a consuming fire, you shall not be burnt, neither shall the lambent flames fix and kindle in any part of your bodies.

3 You may be fully certain of this, from the near relation I stand in to you, and from my immense attributes which are engaged for your protection and defence; who absolutely command, and as I please, with infinite ease controul in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. When a most threatening storm was ready to break over your unguarded land; as paying down *Egypt*, *Ethiopia* and *Seba* to ransom you at

2. When thou passest through the waters, *I will be with thee*; and when thro' the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

3. For *I am* the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy saviour: I gave *Egypt* for thy ransom, *Ethiopia* and *Seba* for thee,

^t *Ransom*. Some understand this of *Tirhakah*, with whom the *Egyptians* and *Sabeans* were probably confederates, and whom *Sennacherib* overcame in battle with his whole army; but others take the passage as only intended to shew that other nations had frequently been destroyed, that the children of *Israel* might be delivered; and that the *Egyptians* in the days of *Moses* are here instanced in.

at their expence, to their great ^{SECT. 57.} cost I diverted it.

Isa. xliii.

4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.

From the time that I selected⁴ you for the important service of maintaining in the world the light and knowledge of true religion; you have been considered as respectable and honourable in comparison with other nations; you have enjoyed many signal instances of an affectionate regard; my favours shall be continued, others shall come in your stead that you may be freed from trouble; and rather than you shall be ruined, I will devote whole nations for your rescue.

5. Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.

You need not be disquieted; & 6 with any alarming fears, since you are positively assured of my constant presence and protection; from the utmost parts of the east, where some of your people are dispersed, I will bring them home to their native country; the western regions shall not detain, but I will also gather them; if they have no other deliverer, yet my sovereign command shall oblige the northern provinces to surrender, and the southern not to withhold them: from the remotest quarters shall my sons be assembled, and my daughters from the extremities of the earth.

6. I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.

7. Even every one that is called by my name: for I have
Vol. II. creat-

I will not be unmindful of a 7 & 8
single individual who makes pro-
H fession

SECT. 57. fession of true religion and practises righteousness; I have produced him that his character and behaviour should reflect honour upon me his Divine Maker; I have formed him that his nature may be refined with virtue. I have finished him in a very compleat manner for attaining perfection and happiness. And as to those who are so destitute of understanding, as to pay an insignificant homage to blind and deaf idols, let them appear in open judgment, and it be known whether they can prove them to be really gods.

Isa. xliii.
7 & 8

9 The largest concourses of people, even all nations if they please, are at perfect liberty to be gathered together; and all people unite in one grand assembly on this occasion; who among them all can produce the incontestible evidence of future predictions, that have been punctually accomplished, for supporting the divinity of their idols: let them shew former things which have been verified by facts, or some events that shall immediately happen; that there may be some authentic testimonies that they are gods; or that they may be convinced that I am the only living and true one, and acknowledge

created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.

8 Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear and say, *It is truth.*

ledge that there is none be-
fides. SECT. 57.

Isa. xliii.

10. Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that *I am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

It is absolutely out of the power of their misguided fond adorers, to produce a credible voucher of a single article that ever they foretold, that was verified by the event; you *Israelites*, saith the Lord, can abundantly testify of me, and particularly my servant the prophet, whom I have chosen for this purpose, how multiplied the displays are of my prescience power and providence: I do appeal to you as knowing, believing, and clearly understanding, that I alone am God, and can plead the earliest antiquity: there never was an idol existing *before* me, there never shall be any *after* me, for from everlasting to everlasting I am God.

11. I, *even* I, am the Lord, and besides me *there is* no favour.

12. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed when *there was* no strange god among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

It is indubitably certain then, that I, even I am the self-existent Being, supremely great, transcendently glorious; it is impossible you should have any at all, unless I be your preserver and deliverer. I have foretold in perspicuous plain language, that I had determined to rescue you from servitude, and accordingly I have done it; long before there was any strange God among you to predict any thing: this you

SECT. 57. do know and can attest, therefore ascertain my sovereign Deity. *Isa. xliii.*

13 I was not only self-existent before heathen idols, the work of men's hands, were fashioned, but antecedent to the generation of light, or original production of day: my power is also so absolute and uncontrollable, that on whomsoever I lay mine hand, the whole world cannot rescue him from my hold: if it be my supreme pleasure to work out redemption for a people, the universe, which is my creature and under my jurisdiction, shall not sport with my resolutions, or hinder my designs.

13. Yea, before the day *was*, I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it.

C H A P.

CHAP. XLIII. SECT. LVIII.

For the sake of the Jews a most terrible message sent to Babylon. Miraculous favours done them in former times. A recent fact of an extraordinary nature to be performed: sufficient to affect and astonish even the brutal creation: out of regard to his own honour, that he might have a people to celebrate his praises, the Lord would perform deliverance for them. Complaint of their ingratitude. Appeal to them what they had done to deserve favour. No occasion to glory in their forefathers. The principal people also obnoxious to reproaches. 14. to the end.

ISA. xliii. 14.

THUS saith the Lord your redeemer, the holy One of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships.

ISA. xliii. 14.

Whatever the Lord hath spoken may be most firmly relied on, and is truly as follows; Thus saith the great JEHOVAH, your deliverer and your guardian, O ye children of Israel, upon your account principally, and to free you from bondage, will I dispatch my servant Cyrus to Babylon; who shall subdue that haughty city, and compleatly humble its rich inhabitants, that indulge to the height of pride and luxury: the sea-faring people also, who

SECT 58.
ISA. xliii.
14

H 3 bring

^u *All their nobles.* In the original, *all their bars*; therefore interpreted of the strong walls and fortifications of Babylon, which Cyrus beat down. *Whose cry is in the ships.* Two navigable rivers, the *Tigris* and the *Euphrates* surrounded it, which may naturally suggest, that it was a commodious haven, and that no inconsiderable number of vessels belonged to it.

SECT. 58. bring them wealth from abroad
 in ships, and fill those floating
 castles with noise and clamour.

15, 16, & You cannot doubt the event,
 17 who know my attributes, and
 the regard I have for your city
 and nation : that I am the found-
 er of your state, the author of
 your holy religion, and your
 supreme governor : thus saith
 the mighty JEHOVAH, who caus-
 ed the waters of the *Red Sea* to
 divide and stand in heaps, for
 his people's wonderous passage
 through them dry-shod ; who
 suffered the chariot and horse to
 pursue them to their own entire
 overthrow : as happened to the
 petrified *Pharaoh* with his great
 and formidable army, so shall it
 be done to your tyrannical and
 cruel oppressors : they were ir-
 recoverably destroyed, suddenly
 overwhelmed, and extinguished
 as tow or flax ; instantly quenched
 as a dying taper, or snuff of
 a candle, in the returning wa-
 ters of the briny deep.

18 Have you not been accus-
 tomed to esteem that redemption of
 your ancestors as wonderful ?
 nevertheless, it will scarce be
 thought memorable in compari-
 son

15. I am the Lord,
 your holy One, the
 creator of *Israel*,
 your king.

16. Thus saith the
 Lord, which maketh
 a way in the sea, and
 a path in the mighty
 waters.

17. Which bring-
 eth forth the chariot
 and horse, the army
 and the power : they
 shall lie down toge-
 ther, they shall not
 rise : they are ex-
 tinct, they are
 quenched as tow.

18. * Remember
 ye not the former
 things, neither con-
 sider the things of
 old ?

* Remember, &c. How far the *Redemption from Babylon*
 transcended, in wonderful circumstances, that from *Egypt*, the
 prophet *Jeremiah* clearly shews, chap. xvi. 14 and 15.

son with your deliverance, by ^{SECT. 58.} means of an heathen prince, from Isa. xliii. your *Babylonish* captivity.

19. Behold I will do a new thing: now it shall spring forth, shall ye not know it? I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

This last interposition shall, in ¹⁹ its circumstances, be singular, novel, and unparallelled: though not immediately, yet it shall certainly happen, neither shall you be able to consider it in any other point of view, than as an accomplishment of what had been foretold: your forefathers wandered forty years in a pathless and inhospitable wilderness, but you shall be accommodated with a plain way and safe passage; and with plenty of refreshing streams in the barrenest deserts.

20. The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

My favours shall moreover be ²⁰ extensive and universal benefits, whereof brutes, dragons, and owls shall be, partakers; and in their renewed vigour, all that is in their power acknowledge my goodness and bounty: inasmuch as I make such ample and liberal provision of element in the barren wilderness, and currents to restore fresh spirits to my select people, after their fatiguing journeys in a dry and sandy desert.

21. This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.

It is not absolutely for the ex- ²¹alted merit of their uncommon virtue and piety, that I vouchsafe them these distinguishing favours;

SECT. 58. favours; but for my own glory,
 that I have formed them into a
 nation, and prescribed laws to
 them, that they might diffuse
 the light of true knowledge; and
 I retain a people, whilst the
 world in general is sunk into the
 grossest idolatry, who profess
 true religion, and to my honour
 as the most high God, do cele-
 brate my praises.

22, 23, A correspondence in their ac-
 & 24 tions and characters with these
 my designs, would have prevent-
 ed them from ever being carried
 captives into a foreign land: O
 ye progeny of faithful *Jacob*, ye
 have not paid me the most ac-
 ceptable homage of upright
 good hearts, and regular virtu-
 ous lives: O ye descendants
 of righteous *Israel*, ye have
 reckoned my service an heavy
 and intolerable burden. It has
 not been to my altar, but to the
 unhallowed shrines of your fa-
 vourite idols that you have
 brought your richest offerings;
 neither have your sacrifices been
 presented in such a manner, and
 with such intentions, as to do
 me honour; or accompanied
 with such a regular tenour of be-
 haviour that I could accept them.
 As to the oblations that I have
 required, they were not so mul-
 tiplied, nor so expensive, that
 you

22. But thou hast
 not called upon me,
 O *Jacob*, but thou
 hast been weary of
 me, O *Israel*.

23. Thou hast not
 brought me the small
 cattle of thy burnt-
 offering, neither hast
 thou honoured me
 with thy sacrifices. I
 have not caused thee
 to serve with an of-
 fering, nor wearied
 thee with incense.

24. Thou hast
 bought me no sweet
 cane with money,
 neither hast thou fil-
 led me with the fat
 of thy sacrifices: but
 thou hast made me
 to serve with thy sins,
 thou hast wearied me
 with thine iniqui-
 ties.

you could reasonably object to them on those accounts : much rather, might you have done it to those bestowed on your images, which have been both the most numerous and the most costly : you have not purchased from a far country, at a great price, the sweet cane for making the precious ointment, or odoriferous incense of my worship : neither have you satiated me with the abundance of fat in your sacrifices. I have not imposed on you heavy burdens ; but you have caused me to serve with your impieties and immoralities, in pain and grief, as a slave to the rigorous commands of the hardest and most cruel task-master : the meanest vassal was never more weary to endure his intolerable servitude, under the most savage tyrant, than I have been with your transgressions and abominations.

SECT. 58.
Isa. xliii.
22, 23, &
24

25. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own sake, and will not y remember thy sins.

You have, therefore, no pretence that you deserve lenity or mercy at my hand : nevertheless, owing to my own boundless good-

y Remember, a Scriptural expression of accommodation to the manners and infirmities of human nature. Thus when the Almighty remits sin, there are supposed to be no more tokens of his displeasure remaining, than there are of resentment in man, who has erased it from his memory that he had been injured.

Thus

SECT. 58. goodness, if you will now be
 persuaded to amend your evil

Isa. xliii.

25 ways, and return to the obedience of my laws, I am truly inclined, as if I had cancelled or forgotten them, most freely to forgive your past offences: on my account I would do this, and esteem it as redounding to the honour of my name, that not a single mark remains in your circumstances, as if I retained any remembrance of the evil of your doings.

26 But if my charges are controverted, and remission and salvation claimed as your right: speak what you really think, remind me what is justice in your case; and let the affair be maturely considered, that you may not be pardoned, but honourably acquitted or vindicated.

27 Possibly you may glory in your genealogy, and promise yourselves extraordinary favours for the eminent virtues of your worthy ancestors: facts, alas! invalidate this plea: their good qualities, had they ever so many,

26. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

26. Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me.

Thus *Herodotus* observes of *Olavus*; a general of *Darius's* army; that though he kept the king's orders in mind, yet he forgot them; that is, he neglected to obey as if he had forgotten them. *Hierod.* l. iii. p. 219.

ny, were their own, not yours; SECT. 5⁸.
 but they had also bad ones, and Isa. xliii.
 were really great offenders, 27
 Teachers, priests, and prophets,
 who should have been examples,
 have not behaved much better
 than you yourselves have done.

28. Therefore I
 have profaned the
 princes of the sanc-
 tuary, and have given
Jacob to the curse,
 and *Israel* to re-
 proaches.

So prevailing a degeneracy, 28
 and universal dissolution of man-
 ners, will prove to be the pro-
 lific cause why your kings and
 princes shall have no more re-
 gard shone them, than the mean-
 est peasant, or lowest orders of
 the people: and that the *Is-
 raelites*, in the ruin and desola-
 tion that have justly befallen
 them, shall be exposed as a most
 execrable generation, and out-
 casts of mankind, to all man-
 ner of reproaches and indigni-
 ties.

CHAP. XLIV. SECT. LIX.

Expressions of goodness and tenderness in God to the peculiar people. Promises made to them certain to be accomplished. Votaries of idols witnesses against themselves, of their own folly and stupidity.

ISA. xlv. 1 & 2.

SECT. 59.

ISA. xlv.
1 & 2

FOR your support, and that if you be reclaimed, you need not despair of relief from your present sufferings, you are favoured, O ye children of *Israel*, with the following declaration. Thus saith the Almighty Lord, from whom you originate, who, in your earliest and most helpless infancy, fashioned every member of your frail bodies, you are his property, he is your preserver; and it is his express command, saying, Let not your spirits sink through any desponding fears, you are the offspring of *Jacob*, the select race of *Jessurun*: I call you still my servants, and will appoint you no offices that I will not enable you to perform.

3 In your painful reflection on the unpromising state of your perplexed affairs, every thing about you may seem as it were dead, and no more to afford signs of an end of, than any satisfaction

ISA. xlv. 1 & 2.

YET now hear, O *Jacob*, my servant, and *Israel*, whom I have chosen.

2. Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee, fear not, O *Jacob*, my servant, and thou *Jessurun*, whom I have chosen.

3. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy feed, and my blessing upon thy offspring.

tion from a tedious servitude in SECT 59.
a foreign land : like the arid Isa. xliv.
and parched ground of a barren 3
wilderness, it wears a brown and
withered aspect ; yet as floods to
the dry and dusty soil, or plenti-
ful showers to decayed plants
and sickly herbs, they serve to
renew their vigour and faded
verdure ; so shall the efficacious
influences of my power and
goodness, restore you and your
offspring to a state of safety,
splendour, and prosperity.

4. And they shall
spring up *as* among
the grass, as willows
by the water-courses.

They shall multiply, grow up 4
in strength and beauty, and a-
bundantly flourish as to all de-
sirable advantages, as trees in the
richest grass land, or willows in
meadows on the fertile banks of
some running stream.

5. One shall say,
I am the Lord's, and
another shall call
himself by the name
of *Jacob* : and an-
other shall subscribe
with his hand unto
the Lord, and sur-
name *himself* by the
name of *Israel*.

Though they be, compara-
tively speaking, at their return
from *Babylon*, but few in number,
yet by swift degrees they shall
surprizingly increase ; and stran-
gers from different quarters shall
unite themselves with the child-
ren of *Israel*, renouncing idola-
try they shall profess true reli-
gion, and worship and serve him
who liveth and reigneth for ever.

6. Thus saith the
Lord, the king of
Israel, and his re-
deemer the Lord of
hosts, I am the first,
and I am the last,
besides me *there is* no
God.

From my immutable perfec-
tion, my relative character, and
moral rectitude, they may be as-
sured of the performance of my
promises ; for thus saith the
Lord

SECT. 59. Lord and king of *Israel*, their
 Ma. xliv. mighty saviour and preserver,

6 the governor of the universe,
 'Tis I that stand engaged who
 am independent and eternal; un-
 created and self-existent, super-
 intendent over all things to the
 last periods of time, and shall be
 the same after they are all ended:
 there is no God besides, or that
 can be compared with me.

7 This has been demonstrated
 by my predictions, for who,
 but I myself, has the determi-
 nate knowledge of future events
 exactly as they shall happen,
 and can relate the whole series,
 with all the circumstances of
 time and place, that have attend-
 ed them ever since I appointed
 the seed of *Abraham* to be my
 peculiar people? what things
 shall be hereafter, sooner or
 later, let their idols, if they can,
 discover to them.

8 When your heathen enemies
 shall prevail, that you are carried
 captive into a land that abounds
 with idols, and their pompous
 temples, you may be in danger
 of having your fears awakened
 with the show of figures and
 group of solemn fooleries; but
 be

7. And who, as I
 shall call, and shall
 declare it, and set it
 up in order for me,
 since I appointed the
 ancient people? and
 the things that are
 coming, and shall
 come? Let them shew
 unto them.

8. ^z Fear ye not,
 neither be afraid:
 have not I told thee
 from that time, and
 have declared it? ye
 are even my witnesses.
 Is there a God besides
 me? yea there is no
 God, I know not any.

^z Fear ye, &c. *Diodat.* interprets, free yourselves from the
 bond of superstition, which is but a vain and anxious fear of a
 false deity.

be not at all dismayed with them: SECT. 59.
have I not foretold what should ^{Isa. xliv.} happen in all the successive ages ⁸ since I entered into covenant with your nation? I may therefore appeal to you as my evidences in these matters. Is there a God besides me? certainly there is not; I know not any, therefore there cannot possibly be any.

9. They that make a graven image, are all of them vanity, and their a delectable things shall not profit, and they are their own witnesses, they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

They who contrive, and after 9 the most curious manner form and carve an idol, make an insignificant vain and foolish thing; and how richly soever they may adorn or solemnly adore the delectable trifle, they can reap from it no benefit; and they themselves are witnesses to their own shame and confusion, because they cannot but know that these handicraft divinities have neither eyes to see, nor understanding to perceive, nor power to recompence any homage that is offered, or regard ihewed them.

10. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing?

They must be insensible to all 10 motives of interest, and surely destitute of all reflection and consideration, who undertake to form a God; and are at the trouble and expence to make a graven

* *Delectable*, so called because idolatry is a kind of spiritual concupiscence, impure and disordered love, like fornication or adultery. *Diodat. in Loc.*

SECT. 59. graven image, that they are fastidious before hand cannot be of the least advantage.

Isa. xlii.

11 All concerned in carrying on so gross an absurdity, so fatal a deception must necessarily be ashamed; even those artificers who are no more than men, yet will undertake to make a God: let them be united in one collective body, and with the utmost combined force of all their strongest arguments defend their idols, yet they are utterly unable to do it: if reason ever resume its place, conscience awaken with its alarms, or the great and blessed God enter into judgment, they will be filled with trembling horrors, and in the greatest disorder and confusion.

12 The flagrant stupidity may still further appear from instancing in particulars: thus the smith fastens it in his tongs, and operates the shapeless mass of inert metal; frequently turning it in the coals to give the whole an equal degree of heat; he works it into a certain form with the reiterated strokes of the sounding hammer: he exerts all his strength, and is so intent upon the important labour of making an idol, that he hardly affords himself time for taking due sustenance, which the true God provides

11. Behold all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together.

12. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint.

provides, for it is out of the ^{SECT. 59.} power of that spurious divinity, ^{Isa. xliv.} upon which he bestows so much ¹² pains.

13. The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule, he marketh it out with a line: he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with ^a compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man: that it may remain in the house.

The carpenter's exactest care ¹³ respecting the length and breadth, the shape and polish of his wooden divinity is also observable: he stretcheth out his rule to give the sacred timber proper dimensions; he marketh it out with a line, that he may see what is to be cut off on each side, duly to proportion every member, he smooths it with planes, and marks it out with a compass; at last he joins all the parts into a resemblance of an human being, of the utmost symmetry and beauty, dignity and majesty, to be placed in some temple, or receive homage in some private chapel.

14. He ^c heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypripus and the oak, which he strength-
eneth

Designing it to be consecrated ¹⁴ to these uses and services, he exerts his utmost vigour in cutting down the best timber the forest contains:

^b *Compass*, from an original signifying a pair of compasses, or a radix expressive of drawing a circle, to encompass round about with bounds, Job. xxvi. 10. That there were such gods as are above described, as well as of wood and stone, see Dan. v. 4. Indeed the heathens had gods many and lords many: one ruled supreme in heaven; another over the air and winds; a third over the sea; others had their respective provinces of earth and hell. *Jehovah* is every where God, not circumscribed in his presence, not controuled in his operations.

^c *He heweth*, &c. The marginal rendering is, and he taketh courage to himself among the trees of the forest, i. e. he is bold to
Vol. II. I take

SECT. 59. contains: the full grown cedars, the spreading cypresses, and the stoutest oaks: to be hereafter employed for his convenience, he planteth the ash; and though it is intended to dishonour him, the true and most bountiful God, nourishes and strengthens it with his rains and dews from heaven, to its maturity and perfection.

Isa. xliv.

14

15, 16, To a degree of absurdity and
& 17 infatuation that is almost incredible, do the votaries of idols further advance: they apply parts and branches of the trees they make their gods of, to the ordinary uses of fuel to burn, and fires to warm them: the artificer himself conceives of no sanctity in them, that he may not without scruple, appoint them to the lowest offices, of heating his oven, baking his bread, and dressing his victuals; at the same time, that he prostrates himself in the humblest supplication for their support and conduct: therefore acknowledges

eneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it.

15. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it and baketh bread: yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it: he maketh a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

16. He burneth part thereof in the fire: with part thereof he eateth flesh: he roasteth roast and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire.

17. And the residue thereof he maketh

take the fairest trees, and use his utmost strength in cutting them down. Thus Scripture so frequently and strongly remonstrates against it to preserve the *Israelites* from idolatry; represents a creating power as a divine prerogative, and an absolute dominion without rival or competitor, partner or coadjutor: therefore the worship he claims from mankind as resting upon a most solid foundation, *Jer. v. 22. His glory he will not give to another, Isai. xlii. 8. xlviii. 11.*

eth a god, *even* his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, deliver me for thou *art* my god.

18. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts that they cannot understand.

19. And none considereth in his heart, neither *is their* knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burnt part of it in the fire, yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof: I have roasted flesh and eaten *it*, and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?

20. He feedeth on ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver

ledges them as gods, else he ^{SECT 59.} would never pay them this homage. ^{Isa. xlv.}

It is difficult to account for ^{18 & 19} such stupidity, that reason in human creatures should be thus perverted, and as it were compelled to militate against itself; and people confirm themselves in the grossest errors by reflections and arguments that would discover their folly and inconsistency: nothing can place this senseless affair in a stronger point of view for just ridicule, than their own practice: What, if all their faculties and intelligent powers were not perverted, could hinder but they would think with themselves; I have applied part of this tree to the ordinary uses of making fires, without perceiving the least difference in the manner it has burned from common fuel; how abhorrent ought I then to reckon it, from all common sense, to refer what is left to the execrable purposes of making an idol? and prostrating myself to it, as if it was a God, which neither is nor can be any thing better than the stock of a tree?

Hardly any expressions can ²⁰ reach this horrid deception; nor would the simple man more
I 2 highly

SECT. 59. highly expose himself, who gratified his craving hunger with
 Ifa. xliv. ²⁰ eating ashes that have in them
 no manner of nutrition, than the
 vile idolater does: there is no
 benefit, but great detriment and
 mischief in that, from which,
 according to his mistaken views
 of things, he promises himself
 support and comfort: by a most
 foolish delusion he is diverted
 from prosecuting the plain way
 of truth and virtue to satisfac-
 tion and happiness; neither can
 he extricate himself, and say, is
 not this a meer fiction, and no-
 thing like a God, which I hold,
 and see, and feel in my right
 hand.

deliver his soul, nor
 say, *is there* not a lie
 in my right hand.

CHAP. XLIV. SECT. LX.

Israelites to keep in remembrance, and by no means imitate the sordid and growelling temper and behaviour of idolaters. Their past offences forgiven: their deliverance in due season to take place. Cyrus appointed to be the instrument, upon whom success should attend and immense wealth recompence. The destruction of Babylon just, but dreadful. 21 to the 9th of the xlv. chapter.

ISA. XLIV. 21.

REMEMBER these, O Jacob and Israel, for thou art my servant: I have formed thee, thou art my servant, O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

ISA. XLIV. 21.

FOR the sake of my honour and your benefit, I am greatly desirous, saith the Lord, that you, my beloved people, may be effectually guarded against the foulest crime of a vile idolatry; in order to this, when it shall be your unhappy fate to dwell in the midst of this kind of worshippers, do you who have been formed to my true knowledge and service, recollect and seriously consider what account has been previously given you of their vanity and folly; and that I have formed you into a body politick, that you might be an holy nation, and exemplary for all instances of virtue and piety, neither will I be unmindful of you.

SECT 60.

ISA. XLIV.

21

As

SECT. 6c. As to offences and trans-

gressions that are past, if you
Isa. xliv.

22

for the future be willing and obedient, they shall not, as a thick cloud, intercept betwixt you and my favour; but the light of my countenance shining in its meridian beams of the fullest lustre shall disperse them: by an unfeigned repentance do you return to the observance of my laws, then you need no more question your redemption than if it was already effected.

23 As if I now beheld the great occasion and extraordinary favour, I invite all my fellow-creatures, with united hearts and voices, to celebrate God's praises; and O ye exalted heavens, let the music of the spheres improve the harmony; and thou earth, to thy lowest center shout aloud for joy: break forth into raptures of thanksgiving, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree, wave your lofty heads in all acknowledgments, as if you were pleasingly affected that the Lord hath rescued *Jacob* from bondage, and glorified his faithfulness and goodness in the restoration of *Israel*.

24, & 25 Thus saith the Lord of the universe, and thy great deliverer, O *Jacob*, in all thy dangers; who formed you into a nation or people:

22. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.

23. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed *Jacob*, and glorified himself in *Israel*.

24. Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh

maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself :

25. That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad, that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.

26. That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers, that saith to *Jerusalem*, thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of *Judah*, ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof.

ple: I am the Almighty and Eternal Being who maketh and preserveth all things ; who planned out the spacious heavens without any advice, and extended far and wide the habitable earth without any assistance: that as famous as the *Chaldean* magicians are for their predictions, and positive as to the signs of the times, do shew their gross mistakes and false tokens; though they rave like distracted men, He proveth that their divinations are not worthy to be regarded ; defeateth the best concerted schemes of their ablest statesmen, and throweth on them shame and confusion, as if they were the greatest fools, who pretend to the deepest penetration, most perfect skill, or almost unerring wisdom.

It is the same JEHOVAH who establissheth, beyond all question, the prophetic character and veracity of his faithful servants ; and punctually performeth their predictions concerning events he hath in his wisdom and counsel determined to happen, and sent them previously to discover : who declareth to *Jerusalem*, thou shalt be again restored and inhabited by my people ; to the dismantled cities of *Judah*, ye shall be rebuilt for them to dwell in :

SECT. 60. and the ruinous and desolate
 parts I will recover them to their
 former strength and splendour.

Isa. xlv.

27 Whose power is so absolute, that he can with infinite ease remove whatever obstructs his designs: who by expressing only the single word to the collected waters of the deep, *be dry*, and they shall instantly obey; at my pleasure also, says he, I will exhaust the rivers, so that the towns and provinces they defend and environ, shall be speedily surprized and destroyed.

28 Who hath expressly declared with respect to *Cyrus*, saying, I have constituted him my shepherd, and committed my flock to his charge and care; whatever I have determined concerning their recovery, and *Babylon's* ruin

27. That faith to the deep, be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers.

28. That faith of *Cyrus*, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to *Jerusalem*, thou shalt be built; and to the temple thy foundation shall be laid.

a Cyrus, &c. *Jesephus* reports that *Cyrus*, upon reading this prophecy, which *Daniel* is supposed to have acquainted him with, formed a resolution to undertake the *Babylonish* expedition: being delivered in such express terms so many years before the event, some say 170, others 210, may naturally be supposed both to have encouraged this enterprising prince, and greatly contributed to support the distressed *Jews* towards the end of their long captivity. Some understand the foregoing verse of the *Red Sea*, and of *Jordan*; but it most probably refers to the manner in which *Babylon* was taken, *viz.* by drawing away the waters of the *Euphrates* in several channels he had digged for that purpose, that so his army might pass over, and surprize and storm the city. However, it must be confessed exceeding strange, that an heathen prince, such as *Cyrus* was, should credit any prophecy they had to produce, so as to shew such concern for these poor captives: to have them returned, to restore them the rich vessels of the temple, and to furnish them with accommodations for their journey.

ruin he shall execute: to that SECT. 60.
 degree of exactness, as saying to Isa. xlv.
Jerusalem, which at that time 28
 shall be in a state of desolation,
 thou shalt be rebuilt and become
 again a populous and flourishing
 city: and to the temple for my
 worship and service, thy founda-
 tions shall be laid.

C H A P. XLV.

ISA xlv. 1.

THUS saith the
 Lord to his a-
 pointed, to *Cyrus*,
 whose right hand I
 have holden, to sub-
 due nations before
 him; and I will loose
 the loins of kings to
 open before him the
 two-leaved gates, and
 the gates shall not be
 shut.

ISA. xlv. 1.

THIS is the certain language SECT. 60.
 of the Lord JEHOVAH, the Isa. xlv.
 same as if he had formally a-
 pointed him, to *Cyrus*, in the
 course of my providence, I have
 raised him up to be king of *Per-*
sia and *Babylon*; have determin-
 ed to animate and succeed him
 in a series of very interesting
 enterprizes, and afford him an
 easy conquest over nations that
 oppose the utmost rapidity of his
 marches: the progress of his
 arms shall strike terror into the
 minds of princes, that they shall
 become weak and faint-hearted:
 open the gates of their fortified
 towns, even the strongest, set im-
 mediately wide open and surren-
 der the citadels.

2. I will go be-
 fore thee, and make
 the crooked places
 straight: I will break
 in

My constant protection and
 animating presence accompany-
 ing thee, O mighty monarch,
 shall

SECT. 60. shall remove all difficulties in
 the way of thy victories triumphs
 and glory : winding crooked
 roads shall be made direct and
 plain, and all obstructions from
 nature or art give way : the
 brazen gates I will break in
 pieces, and the bars of iron cut
 asunder.

in pieces the gates of
 brass, and cut in fun-
 der the bars of iron.

3 An immense weight of riches
 shall moreover attend thy cheap-
 est conquests ; treasures the
 frightened inhabitants have buried
 in caverns under ground, or
 hidden in secret places, shall fall
 into thy hands : the great end
 whereof should never be forgot-
 ten, *namely*, that thou mayest
 thankfully acknowledge me, who
 have foretold all these things, to
 be the only living and true God ;
 and the children of *Israel* my pe-
 culiar people.

3. And I will give
 thee the ^e treasures of
 darkness, and hid-
 den riches of secret
 places, that thou may-
 est know that I the
 Lord which call *thee*
 by thy name, *am* the
 God of *Israel*.

4 It is principally on their ac-
 count, and that thou mayest de-
 liver them, who are my servants,
 from the tedious sufferings of a
 cruel bondage, that I have ex-
 pressly mentioned thy name ; O
 king *Cyrus*, and denominated
 thee, though thou hast been edu-
 cated among heathens, and not
 acquainted

4. For *Jacob* my
 servant's sake, and
Israel mine elect, I
 have even called thee
 by thy name : I have
 surnamed thee, tho'
 thou hast not known
 me.

^e *Treasures*, &c. This was doubtless verified by several na-
 tions in the rapid course of *Cyrus's* successes ; perhaps in none
 more remarkably than the instance of *Cræsus*, king of *Lydia*,
 whom this victorious prince subdued, and who is reported to
 have possessed immense riches.

acquainted with the incompara-
ble truths of holy writ, my shep-
herd and mine anointed. SECT. 60.
Isa. xlv.

5. I am the Lord,
and *there is none*
else, *there is* no God
besides me; I girded
thee, though thou
hast not known me.

6. That they may
know from the rising
of the sun, and from
the west, that *there is*
none besides me, I
am the Lord, and
there is none else.

7. I form the light
and create darkness:
I make peace, and
create evil: I the
Lord do all these
things.

The existence I am possessed
of is necessary, my attributes im-
mutable and eternal, my great-
ness unrivalled and supreme:
there is not another being in the
universe that can pretend to the
least shadow of a genuine and
true divinity: thou wast at that
time altogether unapprized whose
designs thou wast to accomplish,
and who animated and succeeded
thee: yet it was truly I myself,
who formed thee with a superior
skill for military achievements,
and inspired thee with an invin-
cible ardour, that it may be
fully understood, all the world
over, that whatever thou hast
performed is, in reality, that
which I have effected: and that
there is none besides me that has
peerless power, and an absolute
supremacy of all possible per-
fection.

The deliverance of the *Jews*
may be further considered as a
standing testimony of my univer-
sal jurisdiction: the successions
of day and night exactly corres-
pond to my formation and di-
rection of those natural events:
the same are those various inter-
changing circumstances of pros-
perity or adversity that happen
to

SECT. 60. to individuals or communities

Isa. xlv.

here below; it is not absolutely at any man's option whether he shall kill or save, but it is I the Lord who am judge over all the earth, and do recompence mortals according to the tenour of their actions; shew favour to my sincere servants, and displeasure against their enemies and persecutors; my directing and over-ruling hand is in all these affairs.

8 By my sovereign order it is, O ye heavens, that from on high ye water the earth, and drop down fatness; it is in consequence of my saying, *let it be so*, that the ground produces plenty of corn and fruit; from my command also it shall be as if whole showers thereof were rained down, or abundance sprung out of the earth that my righteousness and goodness shall be displayed in my peoples salvation; you may reckon this impossible in your condition of wretchedness; nevertheless it shall assuredly happen, my promise is most faithful, my power is an all-sufficient sanction.

8. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together: I the Lord have created it.

CHAP. XLV. SECT. LXI.

Opposition to the Almighty, or dissatisfaction with his dispensations, the height of folly and impiety. Cyrus appointed to deliver the Jews, and to accommodate them from the tribute of other nations. Idolaters to be punished. He would not be unmindful of his people, who had provided the earth to be an habitation for all mankind. His promises a full security for whatever they imply. Heathens challenged to defend their idols. Salvation only from God. 9 to the end.

Isa. xlv. 9.

WO unto him that striveth with his Maker: let the pot-shepherd strive with the pot-shepherds of the earth: shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands.

Isa. xlv. 9.

THE universe is God's SECT. 61. creature, sustained by his power, and over-ruled to serve Isa. xlv. his purposes, therefore to thwart⁹ his designs or repine at his allotments, must be equally foolish, wicked and dangerous; something plausible may be urged for a debate betwixt one pot-shepherd and another; and some view from a competition, because both are alike pot-shepherds of the earth; but what could be so absurd and extravagant, as for the clay to exact an account of the potter for undertaking such a work as it is made to be; or censure his performance as rude and shapeless; infinitely more unreasonable and absurd are all mortal man's arguings with his Almighty Maker, respecting his dispen-

SECT. 61. dispensations, from whom he
 hath received, not only his fa-
 shion, but his very being with
 all its supports and accommoda-
 tions.

10 All would most justly censure
 and heavily condemn the per-
 verse and worse than brutish
 child, who should attack his pa-
 rents with such insolent queries
 as follow: to expose his father,
 what a worthless nature hast thou
 propagated? and to deride his
 mother, what a despicable frame
 and constitution have I derived
 from thy child-bearing pangs
 and throws?

11, 12, & Thus saith the Supreme Be-
 13 ing, *Israel's* Governor, and his
 Almighty Maker, Your great
 business, O my people, instead
 of uttering complaints or taking
 indirect methods in your afflicted
 state, is to make application to
 me for knowledge and guidance
 as to future issues; who am so
 much concerned for your
 welfare, that you could not but
 receive something for answer, that
 would contribute to support your
 spirits, or better your condition;
 I never need to be prescribed to,
 there is no danger but I shall or-
 der, inspect, and over-rule for
 the best; I am, doubtless, ade-
 quate to all purposes of admi-
 nistering affairs: to imagine the
 contrary

10. Wo unto him
 that saith unto *his* fa-
 ther, What begetteth
 thou? Or to the wo-
 man, What hast thou
 brought forth?

11. Thus saith the
 Lord, the holy One
 of *Israel*, and his
 maker, Ask me of
 things to come con-
 cerning my sons, and
 concerning the work
 of my hands com-
 mand me.

12. I have made
 the earth, and created
 man upon it: I even
 my hands have
 stretched out the hea-
 vens and all their
 host have I command-
 ed.

13. I have raised
 him up in righteouf-
 ness, and I will di-
 rect all his ways: he
 shall build my city,
 and he shall let go my
 captives, not for
 price, or reward,
 saith the Lord of hosts.

contrary would be the height of SECT. 61
 folly and impiety; because the Isa. xlv:
 earth is my undoubted forma- 11, 12,
 tion; and the whole human race & 13
 that inhabit it, are mine intelli-
 gent offspring, and my constant
 charge: the wide extended hea-
 vens were produced by my Al-
 mighty power; and it is my
 high command, whereby their
 order and stations, uses and in-
 fluences are directed: I have
 raised the *Persian* monarch *Cyrus*
 to engage in the just and equal
 enterprize of rescuing my people
 from slavery: and will facilitate
 and succeed his designs and en-
 deavours to effect it: he shall
 appoint my city *Jerusalem* to be
 rebuilt, and out of his royal
 bounty shall contribute toward
 the expence; it is a part of
 the scheme of my providence;
 faith the world's Great Ruler,
 that he shall restore liberty to
 my people without expecting
 any ransom.

14. Thus faith the
 Lord, the labour of
Egypt, and merchan-
 dize of *Ethiopia*, and
 of the *Sabeans*, men
 of stature shall come
 over unto thee, and
 they shall be thine,
 they shall come after
 thee, in chains they
 shall come over, and
 they shall fall down
 unto thee, they shall
 make

It is added in the express 14
 words of the Universal Poten-
 tate, as a requital, O king *Cyrus*,
 for this thy generous kindness,
 and as a resource for all emer-
 gencies of state, the wealth which
 the *Egyptians* obtain by their
 manufactures; and the *Ethiopi-
 ans* by their merchandize, with
 the riches of the almost gigantic
Sabeans,

SECT. 61. *Sabeans*, shall be brought into

I sa. xlv.

¹⁴ thy treasury: the people themselves shall be subdued, so as to become thy vassals; as captives by following thy chariot, they shall grace thy triumphs, and with the utmost submission, implore thy favour: freely acknowledging, that thy supporter is the Almighty and Supreme Being: and that no one else could crown a fallible mortal, in all his enterprizes, with such prosperity and glory.

¹⁵ Do you patiently wait, O children of *Israel*, and never be in the least despirited by present appearances or seeming delays: unnumbered are the expedients whereby an infinite Being can afford you relief: his counsels and designs are hidden in such mazes of impenetrable obscurity, as easily to allude all human enquiries: to day your enemies rejoice, and you mourn; before the dawn of to-morrow's light, your redemption may be effected, and *Cyrus* without knowing who directs or assists him, proclaim your liberty.

¹⁶ As to the *Babylonians* who have no other dependance than the gods their hands have made, they may seem absolute in power, and their prosperity likely to be perpetual;

make supplication unto thee, saying, surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no God.

¹⁵ Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself; O God of *Israel* the saviour.

¹⁶ They shall be ashamed and also confounded all of them: they shall go to confusion together, that

that are makers of
f idols.

petual; yet their day is coming, ^{SECT. 61.}
their compleat end very near, and ^{Isa. xlv.}
all their hopes from such vanities ¹⁶
to issue in an universal disap-
pointment, confusion and dis-
traction.

17. But *Israel* shall
be saved in the Lord
with an everlasting
salvation: ye shall not
be ashamed nor con-
founded world with-
out end.

Totally different is the real ¹⁷
case of the children of *Israel*,
who truly hope in God, and
most humbly and sincerely serve
him; at that season and by those
means that he appoints they may
assure themselves of deliverance,
safety, and the greatest lasting
happiness; O my beloved peo-
ple, dismiss your unreasonable
fears, let all your groundless
murmurs be hushed and die into
the profoundest silence; you rely
upon one whose attributes are
adequate to the utmost of your
wishes, neither shall you ever
have occasion to repent of the
most unreserved and entire con-
fidence.

18. For thus saith
the Lord that created
the heavens, God
himself that formed
the earth and made it,
he hath established it,
he created it not in
vain, he formed it to
be

You have moreover his ex-¹⁸
press promise, who hath made
provision of habitations on this
earth for all mankind, therefore
must have reserved a place of
settled rest for his children and
faithful

* *Idols*, An idol is said to be nothing, the meaning of which
is, that it has no *virtue* or *power*: for idols were representations
of real and visible beings, such as the sun, moon, and stars,
with other creatures which the *Pagans* had deified, or imagined
the several planets to be habitations of the gods.

SECT. 61. faithful servants; for thus saith
 the Almighty and Eternal Lord,
 Isa. xlv.

be inhabited, I am
 the Lord, and *there*
 is none else,

18 who created the heavens, the
 Great and Independant God, who
 contrived and produced the earth;
 hath founded it on a firm and
 immoveable basis, with views
 worthy of himself, his sovereign
 fiat called it into existence, and
 certainly designed and prepared
 it for human beings, its principal
 inhabitants to consider as
 their dwelling place; thus hath
 he said, whose wonderful works
 are every where conspicuous that
 declare his glorious attributes;
 I am the self existent and supreme
 JEHOVAH, there is not another
 besides myself in the
 whole universe.

19 Though I may seem to hide
 myself, and conceal my intentions
 in the dispensations of my providence,
 which are not clearly revealed
 before it is proper they should
 be known; yet in every thing
 that is of the last importance,
 I have expressed myself with
 the utmost perspicuity and plainness;
 not like the heathen oracles
 which are usually delivered in
 obscure and ambiguous terms,
 from dens and caves, in order
 more conveniently to carry on
 schemes of deception; but with
 perfect openness and freedom,
 so that they could not be
 igno-

19. I have not
 spoken in secret, in
 a dark place of the
 earth: I said not unto
 the seed of *Jacob*,
 seek ye me in vain:
 I the Lord speak
 righteousness, I declare
 things that are
 right.

ignorant in what manner they must act and serve me, if they would fly to me for shelter in their straits and difficulties : my promises also have been most express, certain and faithful, they never signified nor implied more than I have performed : nothing that was not true and just and that the event did not amply verify, ever dropt from my lips.

SECT. 61.

Isa. xlv.

19

20. Assemble yourselves and come : draw near together ye that are escaped of the nations ; they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.

O ye heathens, whether *Babylonians* or other nations, who have escaped or survived the dreadful havock and general destruction that *Cyrus* hath made amongst you, convene in one great assembly : and after their utter inability has so flagrantly appeared to defend the *Chaldeans* against the displeasure of the God of *Israel*, defend if you can the idols and images : most ignorant and stupid must they be who pay any respect to wooden and senseless vanities, and in cases of the greatest emergency, address prayer to a god that has neither ears to hear, nor hands of power to relieve.

21. Tell ye, and bring them near ; yea, let them take counsel together, i who hath declared

Relate it, and prevail with the greatest numbers to attend ; consult most sedately on the occasion

K 2

g Come, to consult or debate.

h Cannot save, Heb. to a God that will not, or shall not save. Lam. iv. 17. Jer. ii. 27. Hos. iv. 1.

i Who hath declared. Literally, who hath made to hear this, or caused this to be heard, from before. of old, from antiquity.

SECT. 61.

Isa. xlv.

21

casion, and report what you find to be sufficiently authenticated: which of all their multiplied idols hath, from ancient times, foretold to their devotees, events at the greatest distance, as I have plainly done the overthrow of *Babylon*? Have not I the Lord, from the earliest period that you became my people, down to the present age, afforded you the most certain prophetic intelligence, therefore the fullest conviction, that there neither is, nor can possibly be any other God, that is punctual to the minutest circumstance of his engagements, and will never fail to preserve and bless those who religiously rely upon him, and uniformly observe his laws.

22 I do therefore invite, and most earnestly intreat you, in whatever remote parts you may be situated, for your own well-being and happiness, to determine your highest regard, not to idols which cannot profit; but to me, who, if you trust and serve me, will preserve and bless you: for I am possessed of absolute perfection and universal dominion, but there is none else that is.

23 However improbable, almost impracticable, it may seem to my people the *Jews*, I have purposed and ratified it with an oath

declared this from ancient time? *Who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the Lord? and *there is* no God else beside me, a just God and a saviour, *there is* none beside me.

22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.

23. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return

return, that unto me
every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall
swear.

oath by myself, as I can swear SECT 61.
by none that is greater; it is a {
resolution most deliberately taken Isa. xlv.
and invariably fixed, that I will 23
vouchsafe all nations such strong
convictions and glorious displays
of my perfection and providence,
that whatever idols they have
formerly doated on, yet for the
future, they shall understand my
will, and be subject to mine au-
thority; render me due homage
and solemnly appeal to me, in
their testimonies by oaths as the
sole king and Lord of all the
earth.

24. ^k Surely, shall
me say, in the Lord
have I righteousness
and strength: *even*
to him shall *men*
come, and all that
are incensed against
him shall be ashamed.

With one consent shall they ²⁴
each of them, declare as follows:
With pleasure do I acknowledge
the Lord to be most just and
faithful in the instructions of
wisdom for our practice, and
the exercise of his power for our
protection: beyond all question
he is leading us to our greatest
good and happiness. Heathens
in crouds shall come to embrace
his doctrine, and become united
to his people: and most shame-
ful and lamentable shall be their
fate, who are offended with his
invitation, and obstinately reject
his overtures.

K 3

As

^k Surely, &c. In the margin it is, *surely he shall say of me, in
the Lord is all righteousness and strength.*

SECT. 61. As to the ancient people the

Isa. xlv. ²⁵ Jews, whatever numbers are ingrafted into their stock, there is no design of rejecting them, unless they are foolish and disobedient: on the contrary, their innocence shall be defended, their justice argued, and their liberty asserted, so that they shall triumph over all their adversaries.

²⁵. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.

CHAP. XLVI. SECT. LXII.

Downfall of the tutelary gods of Babylon: beasts heavy loaded with the spoil. Jews excited to consider and improve their signal privileges. The gross absurdity of idol worship. Cautions against it. Predictions undeniable proofs of Deity. Jews unworthy of the deliverance which nevertheless should be vouchsafed them.

Isa. xlv. i.

SECT. 62.

Isa. xlv. ^I **A**T present, O my people, you are oppressed with the heavy yoke of an ignominious captivity, and the state of your persecutors is in its height of splendour and glory; but

Isa. xlv. i.

¹ **B**EL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden, they are a burden to the weary beast.

¹ Bel, which the Phœnicians stiled Behal, the Babylonians Bal, that is, the sun. Herodotus, and others, suppose this to be Jupiter, who had formerly been king of Crete: not the planet, but the chief of the gods, whom the Greeks called Zeus, the Babylonians Bel, or the sun. *Bel confractus est, curvavit, se boweth down, &c.* that is, the temples and altars were destroyed, as usual, along with the city, neither could this idol protect its worship-

time with rapid wings is hasting SECT. 61.
Babylon to a period, that it shall
 fall, even now it begins to shake; Isa. xlv.
 and its idols, so far from pro-
 tecting it, shall be beaten down,
 and the silver and gold they were
 made of, be laid upon beasts, or
 carried in waggons in such quan-
 tities, as to burden and weary
 the strongest brutes, with the
 rich prize of their ponderous
 gods.

2. They stoop,
 they bow down to-
 gether, they could
 not deliver the bur-
 den, themselves but
 are gone into capti-
 vity.

At once all the *Chaldean* idols²
 shall shew their insufficiency,
 their utter insignificancy, and
 submit to be battered down and
 totally demolished by the *Persian*
 soldiery; it is plainly out of their
 power to deliver the immense
 burden, or hinder but they them-
 selves are carried captives into a
 foreign country.

3. Hearken unto
 me, O house of *Jac-*
cob, and all the rem-
 nant of the house of
Israel,

Altogether different from them^{3 & 4}
 am I your God, who require
 your most diligent attention to
 K 4 what

worshippers, though king *Nebuchadnezzar* had erected to its ho-
 nour a most pompous temple.

Nebo stoopeth, contritus aut succisus est; another God of the *Chal-*
deans, from which *Nabonassar*, *Nabopolassar*, *Nebuchadnezzar*,
Nabonides, and other *Babylonish* monarchs, took their names.
 These idols beaten to pieces by the *Persian* soldiery, were a most
 heavy and intolerable burden for the beasts to carry or draw;
 as the *Roman* author says of the bulls and calves, that they wish-
 ed *Cæsar* might not return.

By *Nebo*, it has been supposed was meant some famous false
 prophet, from whom, deified after his death, oracles were ex-
 pected by his priests, the word signifying prophecy, as *Bel* was
 a military man, hero, or great monarch.

SECT. 62. what instructions I shall give
 {
 Isa. xlvii. you concerning idols, O you
 3 & 4 who descend from the two tribes
 of the family of *Jacob*, and those
 few who remain of the ten of
Israel: you whom I have sup-
 ported from the infancy of your
 state by a most vigilant provi-
 dence, and with more than the
 affectionate concern of a most
 tender mother preserved and
 nourished you: still longer is
 my indulgence continued, for I
 will be the same kind father to
 inspect and maintain you that I
 have ever been, under all the de-
 clenensions and infirmities of an
 advanced age. You are the
 work of my hands, and my bo-
 som and arms shall always bear
 and cherish you: during your
 slavery at *Babylon*, I have re-
 membered, and at the time ap-
 pointed will provide for you a
 compleat deliverance.

5 If ever you are in danger of
 being corrupted, to think of any
 other object of an absolute de-
 pendance, consider what quali-
 ties the heathens have in their
 idols to rely upon, that they
 bear any resemblance to my Su-
 preme perfection? that are equal
 to an Infinite Majesty, that are
 comparable to an universal pro-
 vidence: that there should be
 no difference made betwixt me
 the

Israel, which are born
 by me, from the bel-
 ly, which are carried
 from the womb.

4. And even to your
 old age I am he, and
 even to hoar hairs
 will I carry you: I
 have made, and I
 will bear, even I will
 carry and will deliver
 you.

5. To whom will
 ye liken me, and
 make me equal, and
 compare me, that we
 may be like?

the ever living and true GOD, and deaf and dumb images? SECT. 62.

Isa. xlii.
6, & 7

6. They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea they worship.

7. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea *one* shall cry unto him, yet cannot he answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

8. Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring *it* again to mind, O ye transgressors.

The manner in which they are made, demonstrates how utterly unworthy idols are to be even contrasted with the most High God: that there may be no excess nor defect of weight and measure; the worshippers freely take out of the bag a due proportion of gold; and a sufficient quantity of silver according to the balances: they employ a goldsmith, and he formeth it into a god, to which they pay prostrate homage; they raise it on their shoulders to public view: in solemn procession they carry it to a place appointed for its reception; there it stands for it cannot move or stir itself; yea, when they offer the most devout supplications, it can give no answer; nor under the greatest distresses, afford the least succour.

In this affair, O my people be ⁸ you effectually guarded, for this purpose, frequently recollect how palpable gross the delusion, and inconsistent with your character as men of reason; you are conscious, that in former times, you have acted very foolishly and wickedly as to those matters; but, do you, now recollect what you have done; impartially consider

SECT. 62. sider what evil there has been
 in you, and for the future, pursue a wiser course.

Isa. xlv.

9 Take retrospect views of the wonders of creation and providence; form rational surveys of all my glorious works from the beginning of the world, to the present time; what I have foretold in all ages, and how perfectly correspondent the event has been, all which demonstrate the unity of my Godhead, the spirituality of my nature, and my supreme and unrivalled greatness and excellency.

10 Which may comprehend all, and afford the fullest conviction; foretelling things to come, to the final period of the *Jewish* state and policy from its first establishment; and from the earliest antiquity, equally ascertaining those events which were to do it, as those that have already happened: there is no difference, but that which I have predicted, shall, in my appointed time, and according to my pleasure, be performed, the same as that which is past, and recorded as it has been.

11 More particularly, I shall command from the eastern part
Cyrus's

9. Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else, I am God, and there is none like me.

10. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

11. Calling a *m* ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth

m *Ravenous bird*, alluding, most probably, to the eagle which *Cyrus* bore in his standard, not to lay any great stress upon his aqueline nose, taken notice of by *Grotius. Xen. Cyr. l. viii.*

executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring *it* to pass; I have proposed *it*, I will also do *it*.

Cyrus's attendance, who from a far country, will speedily obey my summons to execute my designs: like a strong-winged eagle, or other bird of prey, he shall, as if he flew over them, readily conquer all opposing powers, to arrive at *Babylon*, and overthrow as if rending in pieces, that city, state and kingdom: whatever I have commissioned, I will enable him to perform: my determined purpose is the same as undoubted execution.

SECT. 62.
Isa. xlii.
11

12. Harken unto me ye stout-hearted, that *are* far from righteousness.

13. I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in *Zion* for *Israel* my glory.

And do you attend, who among my captive people, carry yet along with you refractory and unsubdued tempers: and are far from practising agreeably to your engagements of dependence or obedience; you shall, nevertheless, find that I will perform mine, and deliver you from bondage: the time may seem delayed and long, from the severity of your usage; but it is truly at no great distance, nor shall be procrastinated further than is necessary, before you shall again be settled in *Jerusalem*, and my name glorified for the salvation I have wrought out for you.

CHAP. XLVII. SECT. LXIII.

Reduction and ruin of Babylon. The Almighty to be acknowledged as the author for the redemption of his people, whom he had been correcting for their wickedness. Causes of the destruction of the Chaldeans, their self confidence, presumption, and security. Magicians, astrologers, star-gazers and monthly prognosticators, insulted as the meekest vanities.

Isa. xlvii. 1.

SECT. 63. **M**Y awful message, is to thee O *Babylon*; thou most splendid and imperial city, to which so many nations and kingdoms, for a long succession of ages and generations, have paid homage and tribute: it is God's high command, and thou must obey, to come down and prepare, and dispose thyself for the mighty change of a most solemn and public mourning: think not of a throne, but as a miserable slave, sit down in the dust on the ground: never more to lord it with absolute sway, and be admired for thy greatness,
nor

Isa. xlvii.

Isa. xlvii. 1.

ⁿ **C**OME down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of *Babylon*, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the *Chaldeans*: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

ⁿ Come down, &c. *Blackwall* takes notice of the event as a signal completion of this terrible prophecy, that when *Darius* had laid siege to *Babylon*, the barbarous and inhuman inhabitants, to make their provisions last longer, murdered all their wives, sisters, children, and servants that were useless for war. Only every man preserved one of his wives that was most dear to him, and a maid-servant to do the necessary affairs of the house. *Blackw. H. Introd. Class. p. 90.*

nor pampered in effeminacy with ^{SECT 63.} delicacies of luxury.

^{Isa. xlvii.}

2. Take the mill-stones and grind meal, uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

Your situation is greatly to vary from every thing of that kind, and your servile low employment to be that of the poorest drudges who grind at the mill; you will take a lasting adieu of your stateliness and majesty, and be carried away captives; with your hair deshevelled, in garments so ragged and tattered, as hardly to cover your nakedness, and in the course of your journey be obliged to wade through rivers.

3. thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

4. As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is his name, the holy One of Israel.

The nicest of the sex shall not have it in their power to hide those secret parts, which must give their natural modesty an inexpressible concern to have exposed. It is not so much the *Persian* monarch, as I myself, saith the Lord, who will take ample vengeance for the dishonour done my name, and the inhumanity practised on my people: I will not enter into a contention with thee as a man, with whom thou mightest possibly cope, or excite to compassion, but as an offended God whose power is resistless, and his strokes altogether insupportable: as to the author of our deliverance, his attributes enable him to govern the universe, and to be an all-

SECT. 63. all-sufficient guardian to his peo-

ple *Israel*.

Isa, xlvii.

5 The competition then, O ye haughty *Babylonians*, is with one greatly your superior; and with whatever despotism you have trampled upon the neck of your fellow creatures, you must submit to the Eternal *Jehovah*; and overwhelmed with grief and shame, seek obscure corners, and sit down in profound silence; the thundering voice of your menaces and mandates has lost all its terror, your swelling titles of honour their very meaning.

6 Your power had never been so absolute over them, had not my people, by an enormous wickedness provoked my displeasure; upon this account I suffered them, as if they had been uncircumcised or unclean to fall into your hands, and be used at your pleasure: you have greatly offended me in your relentless treatment of them: neither will I spare you, who have had no more humanity than to impose upon even the aged and infirm, labours and burdens that were utterly unfit for them, and much beyond their strength to bear.

7 The presumptuous language of your obdurate hearts was, as to myself, my beauty and splendour,

5. Sit thou silent, and get into darkness, O daughter of the *Chaldeans*: for thou shalt no more be called the Lady of kingdoms.

6. I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy, upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

7. And thou saidst I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things

things to thy heart,
neither didst remem-
ber the latter end of it.

dour, greatness, wealth and pow-
er, are certain to be perpetuated
to me; and why should I be
concerned for others, or indulge
any feelings for the miseries of
an enslaved people; neither have
you been apprehensive of the in-
stability of all human affairs;
and what calamities might rea-
sonably be expected; at length
to overtake and fall heavy upon
you, for your atrocious violence
and brutality.

SECT. 63.

Isa. xlvii.

8. Therefore hear
now this, thou that
art given to plea-
sures, that dwellest
carelessly, that sayest
in thine heart, I am,
and none else be-
sides me, I shall not
fit as a widow, nei-
ther shall I know the
loss of children.

9. But these two
things shall come to
thee in a moment in
one day; the loss of
children and widow-
hood; they shall
come upon thee in
their perfection, for
the multitude of thy
sorceries, and for the
great abundance of
thine enchantments.

Receive, therefore, this pre-
caution, you who are wholly
immersed in sensual pleasures;
fearless as to changes; and in the
high conceit of your permanency
or immoveable stability, do fond-
ly declare. As to my dominion
and perfection, they are most
firmly established and transcen-
dently great: no empire in the
world is to be compared with
mine, for dignity, magnificence
and glory: the gods may almost
envy, hardly can rival me: no-
thing could be more wonderful,
than that I should ever be oblig-
ed to confine myself, as a deso-
late widow, bereaved mother, or
unpeopled princess. Neverthe-
less, by a sudden stroke and to-
tal reverse of fortune, without
opportunity for consulting or e-
scaping, shall two extreme evils
happen

8 & 9

SECT. 63. happen to you, in the taking of *Babylon*, by *Cyrus*: at one and the same instant of time, in the dethroning of your monarch, shall your constitution be subverted, and your subjects slain or taken prisoners; as a just punishment for the enchantments, magical arts, and practices of divination, which have long prevailed and abounded amongst you.

Isa. xlvii.
8 & 9

10 You have committed, and you have relied on these abominations for safety and prosperity; and concluded, that so long as your magicians could foretel future events, they would secure you, by whatever wicked courses you advanced yourselves: neither God nor man observed, that would resent what you acted; your self-flattering pretences to an extraordinary sagacity and penetration, have deceived you with false appearances, misled you with groundless hopes, and encouraged you to an high degree of arrogance, presumption, and blasphemy, as if you were gods and both uncontrollable and unaccountable.

11 You, who from observing apparent signs, and the aspect of the

10. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, thou hast said, none seeth me: thy wisdom and thy knowledge hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, *I am*, and none else besides me.

11. Therefore shall
o evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know

o *Evil come*, &c. The manner in which the city was taken is not improbably here alluded to, and the monarch or nation with whom

know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know.

the planets, profess to derive a SECT 63. fore-knowledge, what days shall Isa. xlvii. be prosperous, what unfortunate; shall not prove to have skill enough to foresee, from what nation or country, the greatest evil, and dreadful day of your own destruction shall proceed; calamities shall surprize you, which you are not able to prevent, avoid, or remove; scenes of an absolute desolation, that you are utterly unapprized of.

12. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth: if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

13. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels: let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up and save thee from *these things* that shall come upon thee.

In every age, since your city 12 & 13 was built, and state founded, you have been remarkable for a most violent attachment to those arts, and absolute confidence in those who pretended to them; now summons together all your magicians; and try, whether, with all their apparatus of ingenuity and industry, they can be of any advantage; to stem the approaching ruin, or enable you to surmount it; 'twill be all in vain; diversify ever so much the solemnities, and perform one mysterious rite after another, till your patience be quite exhausted; it will not avail: all these cunning

whom they had no previous quarrel, viz. Cyrus, who came upon them unawares, leading his soldiers through unsuspected ways, and entering the city while they were in the midst of their revels.

SECT. 63. cunning men in concert, and
 exerting to the utmost their re-
 spective talents, cannot acquaint
 you with the distresses which
 hang over you, much less di-
 vert their course, or hinder their
 efficacy.

1sa. xlvii.
 12 & 13

14 As well may you expect to
 escape burning, by surrounding
 yourselves with dry stubble that
 catches the first spark that falls
 upon it, and is kindled: thus
 these pretended pryers into the
 hidden book of an unknown
 futurity, and foretellers of the
 fortunes of others, being early
 consumed, themselves shall shew
 how little their knowledge is as
 to those who give credit to them:
 nothing at all of them but ashes
 shall remain, not a brand or coal
 be found.

15 As it shall happen to you
 with respect to your magicians
 and diviners, they have deceived,
 and have no power to relieve
 you: shall it in like manner
 with the multitude of traders
 and merchants from foreign
 parts: they shall wander from
 place to place, till they meet
 with an opportunity of a free
 passage

14. Behold they
 shall be as stubble;
 the fire shall burn
 them: they shall not
 deliver themselves
 from the power of
 the flame: *there shall*
not be a coal to warm
at, nor fire to sit be-
fore it.

15. Thus shall
 they be unto thee
 with whom thou hast
 laboured, *even thy*
p merchants from thy
 youth, they shall
 wander every one to
 his quarters none
 shall save thee.

p Merchants, &c. may be understood of *foreign traders*: but
 most probably, refers to the *affrelogers*, &c. with whom the *Ba-*
bylonians might properly enough be said to labour, trade, deal,
 or traffic, as they made no small benefit of their intelligence.

passage to their native country; SECT. 63.
 neither the one nor the other Isa. xlvii.
 shall be the means of preserving 15
 you from ruin and misery.

CHAP. XLVIII. SECT. LXIV.

Heavy charges brought against the Jews. A succession of prophets had proved insufficient to preserve or reform them from the obstinacy of ungodliness, hypocrisy, and idolatry. Anger suppressed lest God's power and faithfulness should be questioned, and wooden divinities preferred before him. The furnace of affliction had not altogether refined them. Nevertheless they should be redeemed, and Cyrus was appointed to be the instrument in this service: divine commission of the prophet Isaiah most faithfully executed; and happy would it have been for the people, had they hearkened and been obedient.

Isa. xlviii. 1.

HEAR ye this,
 O house of Jacob,
 which are called
 by the name of Israel,
 and are come forth
 out of the waters of
 Judah: which swear
 by the name of the
 Lord, and make men-
 tion of the God of
 Israel; but not in
 truth nor in righte-
 ousness.

Isa. xlviii. 1.

AS has been foretold by my SECT. 64.
 prophet, O ye Israelites, Isa. xlviii
 Babylon will be destroyed, and
 you delivered: yet your most
 diligent attention is required to
 what follows: You are the de-
 scendants of Jacob, and of the
 royal tribe of Judah: you retain
 my true worship, confess my
 supremacy, and glory in your
 peculiar relation to the match-
 less JEHOVAH: but with all
 your seeming reverence, you are
 destitute of sincerity; falshood
 and a dissembling hypocrisy pre-
 vail among you, for in the course

SECT. 64. of your actions you transgress my
laws.

Isa. xlviii.

2 At the same time, this inconsistent generation boast themselves to be denizens of the holy city *Jerusalem*, where the symbols of the divine presence are kept, and the solemnities of his worship performed: they express an entire confidence that he will certainly defend them, whose prerogative it is to support the land of *Judea*, and preside over the universe of being.

3 You cannot but be perfectly satisfied that I am the true God; in a succession of prophecies I have, ever since I selected you to be my people, foretold every thing that greatly concerned you to know: I have determined upon circumstances and events that should happen, and then discovered them to you when the time I appointed came; they happened, though sometimes suddenly, and to the surprize of those who performed them, even at the precise season that they had been predicted.

4 In these striking views, I have manifested myself to keep you within

2. q For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of *Israel*, the Lord of hosts is his name.

3. I have declared the former things from the beginning, and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them, I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass.

4. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is

q For they call, &c. that is, they take and bear the name and quality of the posterity of *Jacob* or *Israel*, and of the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*. In all places where it is said the name of GOD is called on men, it should be rendered, that they bear the name and quality of the children of GOD, *Isai.* xlv. 5. xlviii. 2. iv. 1. *Gen.* iv. 26. *Deut.* xxviii. 10. *Numb.* vi. 27.

is an iron finew, and
thy brow brafs.

within some bounds of duty; SECT. 64.
inasmuch as I knew you to be a Isa. xlviii.
people of a very strange and un-⁴
tractable temper; and your na-
tional character contumacious,
inflexibly hard, and outrageously
bold: you would scarcely be-
lieve them, however plain and
evident the truth was, that my
prophets reported: were hardly
satisfied with demonstrative proof,
and were further uncommonly
prone to rebellion and disobe-
dience.

5. I have even
from the beginning
declared *it* to thee:
before *it* came to pass
I shewed *it* thee: lest
thou shouldest say,
mine idol hath done
them, and my gra-
ven image hath com-
manded them.

I was willing, if it might be,
that the evil effects of this cri-
minal disposition, and extreme
obstinacy should be prevented;
therefore previously acquainted
you, what I designed to do
in future times; lest you should
be tempted to ascribe to your
idols and images the astonishing
effects of my power and provi-
dence, without whose direction
or permission they had never
happened.

6. Thou hast heard,
see all this, and will
ye not declare it? I
have shewed thee
new things from this
time, even hidden
things, and thou didst
not know them.

You cannot, with a shadow of
reason, pretend to this, as you
have heard, how in all ages I
have foretold what should hap-
pen in future times, and how
exactly the event hath verified
the prediction; all which I wish
you most impartially and serious-
ly to consider: and will you not
publish this to the world, and

SECT. 64.

Isa. xlviii.

bear an open and avowed testimony that no expedient has been omitted, whereby I could properly manifest myself to you, and display my perfections: as in ancient times I have revealed what should come to pass, so do I now discover new things, which were before hidden in impenetrable obscurity, and no knowledge you had could have afforded you the least traces or intimations of.

7 As objects just created out of no pre-existent matter, they are this day brought to light: they are not prophecies of which your ancestors have related to you the punctual accomplishment; but such as are immediately contrived and determined upon by the Almighty, consequently such as no human knowledge or foresight could reach before they were declared: so that you can have no plea for saying, we fully knew beforehand what would happen; for it is such an unsearchable secret, that without my revealing, you could not have the least insight into it.

8 I repeat, and most strenuously urge it as an undoubted fact, that ought to make a deep and lasting impression, that until my prophet did, no one had given you the least intelligence on this head;

7. they are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them,

8. Yea thou hearest not, yea thou knewest not, yea from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest

deaf

deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

head; you did not any way know a single circumstance about it; it was communicated at a time when nothing at all had transpired concerning it, that you may have it ascertained to you, that I both caused you to be carried captives to *Babylon*, and delivered you from that captivity: for I knew that if you could think of any other, you would not confess my hand, nor ascribe these things to my superintendency and direction, if you could possibly assign any other cause: from the earliest date of your appointment to be my people, you have acted a very treacherous false part, and prevaricated with my laws of everlasting righteousness.

SECT 64.
Isa. xlviii.

9. For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

Your wickedness highly provokes me; but on my own account, and for my own glory, that my omnipotence and faithfulness may not be called in question, will I suppress mine anger: for your benefit likewise, that you may be reclaimed, and my goodness and mercy celebrated, will I withhold my hand from suddenly destroying you, and that without remedy.

10. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen

I have made all reasonable allowances for your infirmities:

L 4

and

r But not with silver. The marginal reading is, not for silver; the meaning of the latter clause seems illustrated by those pathetic phrases, in all their affliction he was afflicted, &c.

SECT. 64. and however deserving of greater severity your offences have been, chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.
 Isa. xlviii. 10 have afflicted you with a peculiar lenity, and tenderness, in order to your reformation; and when you were in the refining furnace of a *Babylonish* captivity, had my heart and affections so much set upon you, that I intended to preserve and deliver you.

- 11, 12, For the sake of my own honour and an unfulfilled character for a perfect rectitude, will I set them free; for how can I on any account, by any means suffer my name to be blasphemed by mine enemies; and when I have declared my peculiar attributes, as the only true God, to my people, not continue to distinguish the glory of them, from every thing that can be pretended to by heathen idols. Incline your ears to my words, for your good and support, O house of *Jacob*, and children of *Israel*, whom I have invited into a particular solemn engagement, therefore must own and rescue you from thralldom: my prerogative royal is to be self originate, eternally antecedent to all other existences; and the same All-perfect and immutable Being, should they all be annihilated: my wisdom and omnipotence are conspicuously glorious in the stupen-
11. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.
12. Hearken unto me, O *Jacob*, and *Israel* my called, I am he, I am the first, I also am the last.
13. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them they stand up together.

stupendous work of this habitable world's creation: by the span of my fingers have I measured out the vast concave of the exalted heavens: whenever I issue out my orders, they are, as servants in waiting, constantly ready to obey them.

SECT. 64
Isa. xlviii:
11, 12,
& 13

14. All ye assemble yourselves and hear: which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on *Babylon*, and his arm shall be on the *Chaldeans*.

Since these are mine attributes 14
O my people, give an united and most diligent attention to what I am declaring: which among the heathen idols hath foretold events wherein you are greatly interested; or any thing at all relative either to your captivity or redemption? The Lord hath expressed a particular regard to *Cyrus*, and given him the preference above all other princes, to perform his designs respecting the ruin of *Babylon*; according as is appointed him, his arm shall fall heavy on the *Chaldeans*, and utterly destroy them.

15. I, even I, have spoken, yea I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

I, even I, who am all powerful 15
Omnipresent and most faithful have said it, and it shall certainly be done: I have destined *Cyrus* to the important enterprize, I have conducted his marches, and will succeed him in his great undertaking.

16. Come ye near unto me; hear ye this, I have not spoken in secret from the

In the hearing of you all I do 16
declare, and refer it to your first enquiry and closest examination, that

SECT. 64. that I have never affected ambiguity or obscurity, saith the Lord,

Ma. xlviii.

16

such as the heathen idols and oracles have done by their priests, in my predictions by my prophets; from the earliest antiquity that any thing hath, before it happened, been revealed, both the revelation and the accomplishment have been most distinct and clear, that they proceeded from the Almighty and most high God: as of old in other matters, so at present concerning *Babylon* and *Cyrus*, I publish nothing, saith the prophet, but what I am in commission from the Lord, and by the influences of his spirit, charged to signify to his people.

17 Your state of captivity may seem hard and severe, but you have yourselves only to blame, sufficient has been done to render you holy and righteous; then you had never had occasion to be thus dealt with: thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, from unnumbered evils and calamities, the holy one by whom *Israel* hath been instructed, I am your Maker and most just Governor, have various ways shewed you very plainly what concerns your well-being and is necessary to your happiness: as to your conduct and actions, which most concern

the beginning, from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now the Lord God and his spirit hath sent me.

17. Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer, the holy One of *Israel*, I *am* the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

concern you, you are most plain-
ly directed, as reason and con-
science dictate; duty, interest
and gratitude oblige; neither
could you have failed had my
laws been observed, of perfec-
tion and blessedness.

SECT. 64.

Ha. xlviii.

17

18. O that thou
hadst hearkened to
my commandments,
then had thy peace
been as a river, and
thy righteousness as
the waves of the sea.

The noblest satisfaction and
greatest lasting felicity, was of
their nature, and my aim and
most affectionate desire, in every
method I have taken, to declare
and enforce them: had you but
acted accordingly, you had never
known any tedious intervals of
painful servitude and other mi-
series, but an uninterrupted course
of peace and prosperity, like the
even stream of a large river: as
the overflowing waves of the sea,
upon the immoveable founda-
tion of universal righteousness,
your state had been secure, your
peace and tranquillity firmly
established, and your character
respectable and honourable all
the world over.

19. Thy seed also
had been as the sand,
and the offspring of
thy bowels like the
gravel thereof; his
name should not have
been cut off nor des-
troyed from before
me.

Widely different from what
they at present are, a scattered
few, harrassed with wars, wasted
by famines, or reduced by intes-
tine broils, your numbers had
been greatly increased, like the
multiplied grains of sand or gra-
vel, and your posterity truly
important in the eye of all men;
they should not have been dimi-
nished,

SECT. 64. nished, and their lustre almost
 eclipsed and destroyed, as they
 at present are, but should have
 shone forth most illustriously and
 gloriously.

19
 20 Your errors and miscarriages
 have involved you in great ca-
 lamities, and you will be car-
 ried as captives to *Babylon*, but
 you will not always remain
 there: as if *Cyrus* had already
 proclaimed your discharge, I say
 unto you, leave that idolatrous
 city, depart from the cruel *Chal-*
deans; with gratitude and ex-
 treme pleasure, publish your
 deliverance, let the trumpet of
 fame sound to the end of the
 earth, saying, the most high
 God hath vouchsafed the off-
 spring of his servant *Jacob*, a
 mighty, most gracious, and won-
 derful redemption.

21 And in their return to their
 native country, over wild and
 barren deserts, they shall be sup-
 plied with every thing that is
 necessary, as their forefathers
 were in their passage from *Egypt*
 to the land of *Canaan*: rather
 than they should want, he caused
 the waters to flow out of the
 hard rock: he clave asunder the
 flinty rock so that it gushed with
 plentiful streams of refreshing
 element.

20. Go ye forth of
Babylon, flee ye from
 the *Chaldeans*, with a
 voice of singing de-
 clare ye, tell *this*, ut-
 ter it, even to the end
 of the earth: say ye,
 the Lord hath re-
 deemed his servant
Jacob.

21. And they
 thirsted not when he
 led them through the
 deserts: he caused
 the waters to flow
 out of the rock for
 them; he clave the
 rock also, and the wa-
 ters gushed out.

It

Book of ISAIAH.

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22. *There is no*
peace faith the Lord
unto the wicked.

It ought always to be remem-
bered, that distinctions will be
made as to men's happiness or
misery, according to the moral
differences of their virtue or
vice: and whether they be *Chal-*
deans or *Jews*, and in *Babylon* or
in *Jerusalem*, in a state of slavery
or in a prosperous condition, if
they be wicked there is no peace
for them, no real enjoyment to
the ungodly, nor possibility of
security for any blessing.

SECT. 64.

Isa. xlviii.

22

C H A P.

CHAP. XLIX. SECT. LXV.

Attention required of the isles and people from far. His commission and qualifications to whom they were to attend. His complaint of the inefficacy or small success of his endeavours. Encouragement and promise that he should be glorified though Israel was not gathered. Success among the Gentiles : and acceptance with God to him who was despised of men. Desolate places inhabited. Prisons discharged. And abundant provision and protection afforded. The Jews were to be gathered together from the remotest parts whither they had been dispersed. 1—13.

Isa. xlix. 1.

SECT. 65. **Y**OUR particular attention is expected and serious consideration, O you who are inhabitants of islands, and ye people in the remotest regions ; I am going to declare that which you are greatly concerned to know, believe, and improve as true, important and certain : to begin with myself, and elucidate a little my pretensions, and the authority I have to afford instructions or predictions. From my earliest infancy the Lord designed me for the prophetic office I am engaged in : from my very birth, he declared in the name he assigned the great work for which he had appointed me.

Isa. xlix. 1.

LISTEN, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far, The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

That

2. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me.

That I might act with propriety and efficacy in stemming the dreadful torrent of prevailing vice and corruption, he hath prepared my mouth and tongue, so that my speech like a sharp sword can penetrate the inmost recesses of the heart: his peculiar protection is my defence and security from the persecution of my enemies: I may farther compare myself for an engaging manner of address to a polished shaft winged arrow or pointed javelin, that wounds at a considerable distance; he hath covered and hidden me in his quiver, so that I should not be obnoxious to that evil and mischief, that impenitent and ungodly sinners, may be inclined to inflict upon me.

SECT. 65.

Isa. xlix.

3. ^f And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O *Israel*, in whom I will be glorified.

And he hath in express words³ declared unto me, saying, O thou true and faithful descendant from *Jacob* and *Israelite* indeed, in this degenerate age, art my sincere servant and labourer for the greatest good and reformation of the people; in whose testimony for the true religion of piety and virtue I will be glorified, my predictions honoured and believed

^f And said, &c. The great annotators render, and he said thou art my servant, It is *Israel* in whom I will be glorified.

SECT. 65. lievied, my perfections adored,
 and my laws obeyed.

Isa. xlix.

4. Respecting the small success of my ministry, the sequel was then extorted from me: glad should I be, O Lord, said I any way to advance thy glory, and promote the good of my fellow creatures; yet what have I hitherto had to boast of from unwearied labours, continual vigilance, and the utmost expence of strength and spirits; nevertheless this may somewhat comfort me, that thou, O God, art my judge, and wilt measure my acceptance and recompence, not by the precarious event and success of my industry, but by my faithfulness and sincerity in all branches of duty.

5 & 6 To which the Lord answered, who in my original formation, plainly intended me to be the happy instrument of converting his people from the error of their ways: it was what I greatly desired, that they would have been reclaimed, but if they be obstinate in their impenitency, will my God highly esteem me for the fidelity of my endeavours, and support me under all imaginable difficulties and discouragements?

4. Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

5. And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, [†] Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

6. And he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the pre-served

[†] Though Israel, &c. The marginal reading is, that Israel may be gathered unto him, and I may be glorious, &c.

servant of *Israel*: I will also give thee for a light to the *Gentiles*, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

ments? further than that, hath he been pleased to intimate, it is a small matter that thou shouldst restore the common wealth of *Israel* now in ruins; or reform a few *Jews* grown extremely degenerate; I will also dispatch thee to give the light of true knowledge and consequently of peace and prosperity to *Gentile* nations; to be the happy means of peace and safety to the extremities of the earth.

SECT. 65.

Isa. xlix:

5 & 6

7. Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of *Israel*, and his holy One, ^u to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord, that *is* faithful, and the holy One of *Israel*, and he shall choose thee.

To this purpose, the sovereign Lord, the deliverer of *Israel*, the symbols of whose presence are placed in the sanctuary, expressly declares, as to that incomparable man, whom the generality of the *Jewish* nation traduce, and the rulers, for his free admonitions, treat as mean and despicable; hereafter, when his predictions are seen to be fulfilled, his exalted merit shall be confessed; monarchs shall rise from their thrones to do him homage; and princes esteem him worthy of all the regard and deference

^u To him whom, &c. The margin is, to him that is despised in soul, i. e. apprized in his own mind how much he is neglected and despised. *Psal.* cxxiii. 4. Accepted time in the next verse is supposed to be an allusion to court-days; and the custom of princes to set apart certain portions of their time for receiving petitions and addresses from their subjects, which would then be likely to be *molissima tempora fandi*, and more readily granted, than if preferred unseasonably, and so as to interrupt other important affairs.

SECT. 65.

Iſa. xlix.

ference, that can be shewed him, inasmuch as the Almighty hath very minutely performed the promises he made in his name; and given undeniable conviction that he had chosen and appointed him to the station and important character he so respectably and honourably sustained.

8 Which constitutes a most illustrious fame and immortality of glory, the all-discerning Being hath declared his approbation, *saying*, when the wished for period of my people's deliverance shall commence, as an address to some grand personage at a most favourable conjuncture is accepted, thine intercession shall be attended to for their welfare and happiness; to obtain my kind assistance, and to confirm my covenant; by which I am engaged to restore to its former condition of prosperity, the land of *Judah*: and enable the children of *Israel* to rebuild and possess those ancient inheritances which have long lain waste.

9 That thou, O *Cyrus*, mightest cheerfully accomplish what has been foretold of thee: and be the

8. Thus saith the Lord, in an accepted time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.

9. That thou mayest say to the *x* prisoners, go forth: to them that are in darkness

x Prisoners, &c. The captives seem here compared to a flock of sheep, that being freed from their folds, as they go along

ness shew yourselves:
they shall feed in the
ways, and their pas-
tures *shall be* in all
high places.

the signal means, in the divine SECT 65.
hand, of restoring liberty to Isa. xlix.
captives: saying, to those who
have been secreted from human
society in the lonely durance of
dark and gloomy prisons, appear
openly on the public stage, must
be extremely welcome. There
shall, moreover, be all things
necessary and convenient provid-
ed, for your entertainment in
your long journey; and places
which are usually barren afford
plenty of pasturage.

10. They *shall* not
hunger nor thirst,
neither shall the heat
nor sun smite them:
for he that hath mer-
cy on them shall lead
them, even by the
springs of water shall
he guide them.

They shall not greatly suffer, 10.
in passing through inhospitable
deserts for want of due suste-
nance: neither shall they be
overcome with heat in sultry
climates, nor scorched by the
sun's most powerful meridian
beams: for he who is so full of
compassion as to redeem them,
shall conduct them along the
banks of some large river, where
there are perpetual refreshing
breezes, and not fail in any one
instance to protect and defend
them.

M 2

No

along graze: and the next verse to allude to the provision God
made for the children of *Israel*, by means of the pillars of the
cloud and of fire, for their travels through the wilderness: also
his showering down *manna*, and fetching water out of the flinty
rock. See *Psal.* cxxi. 5, 6.

SECT. 65.

Isa. xlix.

No great difficulty shall arise from the steepest declivities of lofty mountains, but their paths shall be even and level; and the road in lower ground shall be raised to such an elevated height that they may regularly proceed without interruption or molestation.

12 They shall be gathered from the remotest country to which they have been dispersed, by calamities in their own: even from almost all quarters of this habitable earth: and as they shall rendezvous, it may be remarked, lo! these have travelled from the north, these from the west, and these from the land of *Simim*.

11. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my high way shall be exalted.

12. Behold, these shall come from far: and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of *Simim*.

C H A P.

CHAP. XLIX. SECT. LXVI.

Heaven and earth made to congratulate the Jews upon their restoration. Complaint of its having been long delayed and their misery great. Certainty thereof in due season, and of the great increase of the people. Promises to be accomplished by additions of Gentiles, and signal advantages from them. Strength of the Chaldeans no hindrance, but the Jews should be rescued from them, and their inhumanity severely re-sented. 13 to the end.

Isa. xlix. 13.

SING, O heavens, and be joyful O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

Isa. xlix. 13.

AS if the favourable event, ^{SECT. 66.} which is most certain, had ^{Isa. xlix.} already happened, suffer me to ¹³ invite you, O ye inanimate beings, as if you had sensations and reflections, and had sympathized with their sufferings, even heaven and earth to be sensibly delighted that they were ended: aspiring mountains with pleasure in joyful songs to congratulate the children of *Israel* for their wonderful deliverance. The occasion is signal, the consolation great, the compassion inexpressible, which the Lord hath vouchsafed those servants whose afflictions and miseries have rendered them contrite and humble, penitent and obedient.

14. But *Zion* said,
The Lord hath for-
faken me, and my
Lord

But the prophecy, however ^{14 & 15} acceptable and sufficiently au-
M 3 thenticated

SECT. 66.

Iſa. xlix.
14 & 15

thenticated, will ſcarce at firſt be credited by the inhabitants of *Zion*; they will be apt rather to ſay, bemoaning themſelves and almoſt deſponding, our captivity and miſeries have been ſo long continued, and our redemption deferred, that it looks more likely that the Lord hath utterly forſaken us; and our Lord, who was formerly mindful of his covenant and promiſe, hath forgotten that we are his people. To which, ſaith the prophet, I can, upon the beſt authority of the word of the Lord; answer by asking, Did the affection and tenderneſs of a mother ever ſuffer her to eſtroy all remembrance of her ſucking infant, that ſhe was ſo unnatural and cruel as not to have the leaſt regard for the cries of her afflicted babe? It is poſſible that mothers may be worſe than brutes, real monſters, and horridly negligent; yet you are my creatures and my people, and may be certain that you are ever freſh in my memory.

16 As if ſome ſenſible representation of thy name, image or picture was engraved upon the palms of my hands, as often as I opened them, to preſent itſelf a freſh to my eyes; ſuch a memorial, or equivalent in my affection do I preſerve, that it is
as

Lord hath forgotten me.

15. Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.

16. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.

as easy for me to forget as my-^{SECT. 66.}
self; but that the shattered con-^{Isa. xlix.}
dition of your ruined walls shall¹⁶
be continually in my remem-
brance, till they are repaired.

17. Thy children
shall make haste;
thy destroyers and
they that made thee
waste shall go forth
of thee.

If thou wait but a little, and¹⁷
hope patiently, thy dear off-
spring shall, with all speed re-
turn to thy open and welcome
arms: thine enemies that sought
thy ruin, shall not have it in
their power to give thee further
disturbance: and those arrogant
invaders, who spread desolation
through the country, and at pre-
sent possess some of its parts,
shall no longer pretend any right,
but shall freely surrender it to
its original proprietors.

18. Lift up thine
eyes round about,
and behold, all these
gather themselves to-
gether, and come to
thee: as I live, saith
the Lord, thou shalt
surely cloath thee
with them all, as
with an ornament,
and bind them on thee
as a bride doth.

I am so positive in the affair,¹⁸
at this distance of time, I do
call upon you, O inhabitants of
Jerusalem, to take a survey of
the country all around, what
multitudes shall croud together
to do honour to your city and
nation: as I live, saith the Lord
Jehovah, they shall be ornaments
to your state: and their charac-
ters and qualifications, as jewels
to a bride, to set you off to the
utmost advantage of lustre and
beauty.

19. For thy waste
and thy desolate
places, and the land
of thy destruction
shall even now be too
narrow

And as to the strength of,¹⁹
your kingdom, and numbers of
your people, they shall be great-
ly multiplied: to that degree

SECT. 66. that the waste land and ruinous parts, shall not be large enough to afford them room; those who threatened you with a speedy end, and like wild beasts their prey to devour you, shall be removed at too great a distance to cause any uneasiness. Your posterity, as they did formerly in *Egypt*; when you seemed left childless, like a desolate widow, and rejected by the Almighty, shall so quick increase as to complain, that the whole country cannot include them: saying, the bounds are too narrow, give us larger tracks and further scope, that we may employ our hands in cultivating them, and providing support for our growing families.

21 The event is astonishing, and almost incredible and unaccountable from natural causes, therefore the language of your hearts and thoughts may be as follows: whence arises this extraordinary change in the streets of *Jerusalem*, lately almost empty, now thronged with people; who hath begotten, educated, or situated and concealed them, thus suddenly to appear, and give a most different and delightful aspect to the state of our affairs? as for my part, I was bereaved of my children, desti-

tute

narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20. The children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

21. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold I was left alone, these where had they been?

tute of my husband, unsettled SECT. 66.
and scattered to almost all lands, Isa. xlix.
distressed on every side, and 21
seemingly discarded by my God
and maker : whence then is the
scene so remarkably changed ?

22. Thus saith the
Lord God, Behold I
will lift up mine hand
to the *Gentiles*, and
set up my standard to
the people : and they
shall bring thy sons
in *their* arms, and
thy daughters shall be
carried on *their* shoul-
ders.

The affair will indeed be ex-22
traordinary and unparelled, but
let it be remembered, saith the
Lord, that I, who absolutely
command all things in heaven
and earth, do by my word and
promise ascertain it : at what-
ever distance they are, I will lift
up my hand to the *Gentiles*, and
they shall observe it : I will set
up my standard to the view of
the people, and they shall be
satisfied it is not without my
Almighty power to attend it :
therefore they shall shew thine
offspring a peculiar respect, and
afford them all possible assistance
in their labours and travels.

23. And kings
shall be thy nursing
fathers, and *their*
queens thy nursing
mothers : they shall
bow down to thee
with their face to-
ward the earth, and
lick up the dust of
thy feet, and thou
shalt know that I am
the

Heathen princes shall also af-23
ford them a peculiar encourage-
ment in the great and signal fa-
vours they shall do them : they
shall also give the strongest pro-
per marks of an extraordinary
respect and deference : and when
you see these prophecies accom-
plished, you must acknowledge
that

y *Nursing fathers*, &c. The origin imports, to do great and
signal favours, to give peculiar assistance or encouragement, to
confer great degrees of wealth, honour, or power. *Isai* lx.
10. lxvi. 11 and 12.

SECT. 66. that I am the true God; and

Isa. xlix.

that those who rely upon my declarations, and expect such deliverance as I have foretold,* shall find me to be faithful, and in every respect meet with the desire of their hearts.

24 & 25

If objections are raised, and how extremely difficult my people shall find it to rescue themselves from the mighty power of the *Babylonish* empire, with the injustice of attempting to do it in those who are *Chaldean* property by the right of arms: let it be considered as a full answer, saith the Lord, that I who have a previous sovereign right in the *Jewish* captives, and likewise an invincible power to assert it, do positively declare that they shall be delivered, whatever be their power or their pretences, who are terrible, and would detain you in bondage: for I myself will oppose and dispute the affair with those who are zealous against you; and I will protect and defend your posterity, that no one shall injure or oppress them.

26 You, my people, need not engage in the painful and disagreeable

the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

24. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?

25. But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

26. And I will feed them that oppress

* And I will feed, &c. Xenophon, in his *Cyropæd.* relates that many of the *Chaldeans* fell off from *Balthazar*, their king, and joined

press thee, with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know, that I the Lord am thy saviour and redeemer, the mighty one of *Jacob*.

greeable office of the effusion of SECT 66.
your enemies blood; their divisions and animosities among Isa. xlix.
themselves shall bring on them a most heavy and dreadful destruction: as famished wretches fall greedily on to devour the plentiful provision of a well-spread table, with such eagerness and madness shall they embroil their hands in one anothers blood: so that all men shall clearly understand, and be fully satisfied, that I the Lord of the universe, am on your side, do espouse your cause; and the mighty protector and guardian of the seed of *Jacob* is able to deliver you from your most potent and inveterate adversaries.

joined themselves to *Cyrus*, who were the most forward in surprizing the city, and shewed the *Persians* the way to the king's palace, where they slew him and all his attendants.

C H A P.

CHAP. L. SECT. LXVII.

The Lord had not, strictly speaking, rejected his people, but they had forsaken him, neglected his homage and service, and repeated messages sent by his prophet. Present affairs dark and gloomy. Isaiah authorized to brighten them, and prepare and dispose the minds of the captives for deliverance. It is by patience, sufferings, and support that they were to be prepared. Slighting his admonitions certain to be fatal.

Isa. l. i.

SECT. 67. **O** Ye captive Jews, whose impatience is so great that you are ready to despair, as if abandoned by heaven and providence: for your support and encouragement, the Lord hath declared as follows; upon slight occasions jealous husbands put away their wives, giving them a writing of divorce never more to receive them: can you produce any evidence that I have dealt with you in this manner. Parents, under extreme difficulties, have been constrained to make sale of their children, to satisfy the rigorous demands of unfeeling creditors; have you a single instance to mention in which I have thus disposed of you; the truth is, that by your iniquities you have sold yourselves into a state of bondage: all vice

Isa. l.

Isa. l. i.

THUS saith the Lord, where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

vice is in its natural effect misery, and your abominations have so highly provoked a most holy God, that he might justly have done it, though he has not absolutely rejected you from being any longer his people.

SECT. 67.

Isa. 1.

2. Wherefore when I came *was there* no man? When I called *was there* none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh because *there is* no water, and drieth for thirst.

You were made captives and² are continued in bondage, for no other reasons but because you have criminally neglected all proper expedients for your redemption: when I shewed you by my prophets what these were, was there any man that regarded? When you were called upon to amend your evil ways: who among you acted correspondently or was reformed? From your own obstinacy of impenitency you must account for the prolongation of your calamities; you will not presume to say, that my hand is at all shortened that it cannot extend to work out your recovery; nor that I am not able, if it was fitting and reasonable, to perform as great deliverances as have been done in ancient times. Recollect, how at my chiding them, the waters of the sea instantly dried up? by a word only I converted the rivers into a sandy desert; as the effect of this miracle, the finny broods sent forth an offensive smell; they soon died when the element was with-

SECT. 67. withdrawn from them, and their thirst no longer assuaged.

Isa. 1.

3 No human conceptions can be elevated to a degree of majesty and sublimity that is adequate to my boundless attributes : I give the sun all the dazzling lustre of its brightest beams ; and whenever I please, I cloath the heavens, as in a mourning habit with the blackest clouds ; the dismal plague of *Egyptian darkness* was obsequious to my order, and sackcloth universally wore, as in times of the most solemn public humiliation.

4 The Lord hath compleatly furnished me, his prophet, with learning and abilities, for the important service of informing your understandings, and moving your affections, that you may be duly prepared for the deliverance intended you. I am taught and fully instructed, how to administer advice and consolation to the best advantage, according to the times and seasons ; to revive those spirits which are ready to droop under the heaviest burdens, and recover that patience which is almost exhausted : as diligent masters early awaken their scholars to improve, in order to make progress, the successive hours of morning, by a close application to study, so am I every

3. I cloath the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

4. The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary : he wakeneth morning by morning : he waketh mine ear to hear as the learned.

I every day excited by a regular ^{SECT. 67.} series of visions or revelations, ^{Isa. 1.} that I may be eminently skilful and useful, and in all respects qualified for answering God's gracious purposes to his peculiar people.

5. The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

Such measures hath the Lord, used as to influence me to hearken to his will, and observe his pleasure, rendering my mind open to his communications: I was not, like too many of those to whom I am sent, of a stubborn and refractory temper: neither have I declined the service, nor perversely refused to carry the message, though I foresaw what would be the consequence as to its reception and entertainment.

6. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

My thoughts were entirely bent upon fidelity in the discharge of my duty, and his acceptance who appointed me, so that I very readily submitted to the most opprobrious bad usage: neither was there an instance of contempt, outrage, or brutal violence, that I suffered not from their mad rage, their cruel and inveterate malice: I never concealed any necessary truth, nor was guilty of any criminal compliances to avoid the grossest affronts or the highest indignities.

I am

SECT. 67. I am fully satisfied that the
 1sa. 1. great and blessed God, who appointed me to this important
 7 office, will assist and support me against all opposition; I therefore harden myself, and confirm my resolutions by reflection, to out-brave all injuries and reproaches; my courage is not to be surmounted, for I am certain of an happy issue, and that I shall not be disappointed in the greatest of my hopes, and the end of my faith and patience.

8 & 9 The Almighty and Eternal God, whose I am, and whom I serve, is always in perfect readiness to vindicate my cause, and ascertain my divine commission, in despite of all my enemies, by the accomplishment of those things he hath enabled me to foretel: Who is he that will argue the affair, or debate the point against me? Let us both appear in the presence of the supreme and all-discerning Judge; who is mine antagonist? Let him draw near to me at this most awful tribunal, where it shall soon be tried and known who is in the right, and who is wrong. It may be noted to my advantage, that a most just and holy God is on my side, and will afford me his aid; who among frail mortals is there, that will be daring enough

7. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

8. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.

9. Behold, the Lord God will help me, Who is he that shall condemn me? Lo they all shall wax old as a garment: the moth shall eat them up.

enough to pronounce on me ^{SECT 67.}
 a sentence of condemnation? ^{Ifa. 1.}
 those who are so unrighteous,
 and ungodly as to do it, however
 rich and powerful shall not be
 successful; like a garment they
 shall gradually wear away, as the
 moth eats it up, they shall waste
 away and utterly perish.

10. Who is among
 you that feareth the
 Lord, that obeyeth
 the voice of his ser-
 vant, that walketh
 in darkness, and
 hath no light? Let
 him trust in the name
 of the Lord, and
 stay upon his God.

This consumption or perdi-¹⁰
 tion will befall mine enemies;
 they are but too many; others,
 whatever their number is, may
 expect the contrary; and the
 captive who dwells at present in
 a dissolute and idolatrous *Baby-
 lon*, yet continues to profess true
 religion, and to observe its laws:
 who diligently attends to the in-
 structions of his faithful servant,
 yet whose mind is in danger,
 from his forlorn condition, of
 being over-clouded with gloomi-
 ness and melancholy, let him be
 persuaded to persevere in the un-
 shaken firmness of his religious
 reliance; and support himself,
 with the certainty of his truth
 and faithfulness, who has en-
 gaged his promise for his deliver-
 ance.

11. Behold, all ye
 that kindle a fire,
 that compass your-
 selves about with
 sparks: walk in the
 light of your fire,
 and in the sparks that

The righteous, who acts in¹¹
 this manner, shall not fail of
 enjoying the glorious light of
 his recovered liberty: on the
 other hand, all you who have
 recourse to other expedients of
 your

SECT. 67. your own power, or of foreign
 aids, you will find yourselves
 disappointed in your expectations
 of peace or safety from them.
 Like an unthinking man, who
 kindles a fire to afford him light
 and heat, and suffers it to in-
 crease to that degree of vehe-
 mence, till, as a kind of con-
 flagration, it utterly consumes
 him: in like manner shall you
 be sunk, by your flattering
 schemes of prosperity, into the
 depths of misery and destruction.

ye have kindled.
 This shall ye have of
 mine hand; ye shall
 lie down in sorrow.

CHAP. LI. SECT. LXVIII.

The righteous encouraged. The time drawing near, when God's promises should be fulfilled and his kingdom greatly enlarged. Prayer that the Almighty power might be signalized in the overthrow of his people's enemies. Man not the object of fear, where there is an absolute confidence in God. The sufferings of the Jews completed: their oppressors shortly to drink the bitter cup.

ISA. li. I.

SECT. 68.

Isa. li.

YOUR fixed regard is de-
 manded, O all ye whose
 study and endeavour it is to
 know and observe the laws of
 justice, equity, and mercy; who
 unfeignedly desire to serve, to
 please, and to be approved of
 God, that ye may not be dis-
 couraged in this regular course:
 the

ISA li. I.

HEarken to me,
 ye that follow
 after righteousness,
 ye that seek the Lord:
 look unto the rock
 whence ye are hewn,
 and to the hole of the
 pit whence ye are
 digged.

the situation of affairs may be ^{SECT. 68.}
dark and cloudy, and men of ^{Isa. li.}
worth and character, few in
number; yet recollect the origi-
nals of your nation; how small
your first rise was; not unlike
an hard rock in a quarry, that
nevertheless has been wrought
into a spacious building: or the
aperture of a pit or foundation,
that by continually flowing, has
at length produced the refresh-
ing streams of a large river.

2. Look unto *Abraham* your father,
and unto *Sarah* that
bare you; for I cal-
led him alone, and
blessed him, and in-
creased him.

The improbability, of your ²
restoration and future prosperity
in all respects, cannot be greater
than that of your ancestor *Abra-
ham*, and *Sarah*, from whom
you sprung; that from so dead a
stock, should arise so large a
posterity. They were no more
than a single pair, and childless,
when I brought them out of
Chaldea; neither had he any pros-
pect of an issue from his spouse,
being barren and past the usual
age, before she conceived: yet
owing to my favour and blessing,
he became in number as the stars
of heaven, increased to a multi-
tude, like the sand on the sea-
shore.

3. For the Lord
shall comfort *Zion*:
he will comfort all
her waste places, and
he will make her
wildernesslike *Eden*,
and

This part of your history, ³
and how your state was founded,
can be no secret to you. Now
the same great and blessed God
will as certainly be gracious and

SECT. 68. merciful to you, as he was to

Isa. li.

Abraham; will comfort *Zion* by raising that place to its ancient beauty and splendour; making its desolate parts to be again inhabited: and the country which lay waste like a wilderness, to abound in corn and fruit like *Eden*; even that which was overrun with weeds and brambles, truly to resemble the earthly paradise, where the originals of our race first dwelt: grief and lamentation shall be banished; and nothing but demonstrations of joy and gratitude heard in the streets; with the loudest and most transporting sounds of vocal and instrumental music.

4. Give diligent attention, O my dear countrymen, and let what I am declaring, make the deepest, lasting, impression: for it is determined by the supreme and all-adored Being, that religion shall not be wholly lost and buried in oblivion, by your long captivity amongst a deluded race of idolatrous *Babylonians*; but the divine laws shall be again revived and inculcated as your rules and measures, whereby you are to be guided, as to right and wrong, good and evil, virtue and vice.

and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

4. Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

The

5. My righteousness is near: my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people: the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

The event is not only certain, but the wished for season approaching, when my truth and faithfulness of promise, shall be displayed in the performance and redemption of my people: if Cyrus's decree be not already issued forth, the predictions clearly shew, from the time fixed for their accomplishment, that ere long it shall be: and my omnipotence exerted in correcting their cruel oppressors; *Gentiles* also, in the remotest parts, hearing the reports of my amazing transactions, shall raise hopes of the like favours, and shall repose an absolute confidence in my power and superintendency.

6. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

The reliance, to those who observe my laws, is a well-grounded one; for sooner than my word should fail, shall the wonderful fabric of this visible world, which is so firmly established, and has so long been preserved, be totally dissolved: the time will indeed come, when the strangest convulsions and revolutions shall happen in nature: the heavens pass away like smoke; the earth wax old, and worn out as a garment, and the inhabitants, without exception, all submit to the common fate of an universal mortality; but my engagements stand

SECT. 68. upon the firmest foundation of
 Isa. li. my own immutable attributes;
 6 and it is impossible that my righteousness, truth, and faithfulness, should be abolished or destroyed.

7 & 8 Nothing can afford me a more sensible pleasure, than reviving your languishing spirits; suffer me therefore, again and again, to request your close attention, you who lead righteous and good lives, who are sincerely concerned to obey my laws, never be affected with any insults that are offered, or reproaches thrown upon you by unthinking men, on account of your piety and virtue; neither be dismayed should the greatest of them stigmatize your names for your religious confidence: for as a moth by slow degrees, but most certainly consumes a garment; and as a worm destroys a woollen cloth, so insensibly but infallibly shall they waste away; but there is an unquestionable security, in my natural and essential attributes, for my moral ones of righteousness and goodness, that they shall be perpetual; neither is it to be supposed, that my promises for my people's salvation, should fail throughout all their successive ages and generations.

Of

7. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not *it* that hath cut *Rahab*, and wounded the dragon?

Of all this the good and up-
right may be understood to an-
swer, We are most fully satisfi-
ed, nor can entertain the least
doubt of the divine matchless
Omnipotence: but suffer us, O
thou invincible Being, from the
depths of misery to pray, that
thou wouldest not any longer
defer to exert thy power: gra-
ciously appear for us, as in
former times thou didst for the
rescue of our forefathers from
imminent dangers, and the over-
throw of their enemies. Hast
thou not the same undecayed
strength and vigour that gave
Rahab or *Egypt* sensible heavy
strokes, and destroyed the dra-
gon *Pharaoh*.

SECT 68.

Isa. li.

9

10. Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

Art thou not possessed of the¹⁰
like boundless might, as when
thou driedst up the waters of the
Red Sea: instantly clearedst the
deep channel, and renderest the
oozy bottom a firm path for the
pursued and unarmed *Israelites*
in perfect safety to pass over,
and escape absolute destruction
from their inveterate enemies.

N 4

The

^a *Arm*, &c. From an original signifying the shoulder of any animal, *Numb. vi. 19.* figuratively, *power, strength*; any kind of help, or support, as *riches, friends*, &c. *Job. xxii. 8, 9.* In the text the power and operation of an Omnipotent Being. *Mighty men* in the Hebrew idiom are the men of the arm.

SECT. 68.

Isa. li.

The peculiar people who have so frequently been distinguished with miraculous favours may positively conclude, that being delivered from *Babylonish* slavery they shall be restored to their native land: and with all imaginable demonstrations of joy shall return to mount *Zion*: their journey shall be safe and pleasant, and their settlement be in a lasting tranquility and peace, happiness and prosperity: all pains and griefs, as if carried away upon the eagle's strong pinions, with its soaring flight, shall speedily be removed far from them.

12 & 13

On all occasions of uneasiness, O ye beloved people, the certainty of sovereign relief should immediately occur to you, to calm your tumultuous thoughts: for thus saith the author of all existence, and source of all happiness and satisfaction: I, even I, am he who by the most faithful promises afford you substantial ground of perpetual peace, hope, and consolation: if you believe in me, and order your
conversa-

11. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with ^b singing unto *Zion*, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?

13. And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? And hast feared continually

^b *Singing*, &c. An allusion to the joyful manner in which the *Jews* used to journey to *Jerusalem* to attend thrice in the year their solemn festivals: and *everlasting joy on their heads*, to the crowns, chaplets, or garlands of flowers and ever-greens, with which the newly-married had their heads adorned, and which were used on other occasions of public rejoicing. Cant. iii. 11.

tinually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor?

conversation aright, who are you, SECT. 68.
 who are your enemies, or why Ifa, li.
 do you give way to such dastardly thoughts, that you should 12 & 13
 be inordinately apprehensive of any imaginable evil, that is within the limited power of short-lived man; who shall so soon resign his breath, and of his frail offspring, that like the grass of the field shall shortly be mowed down and withered? and forget what an Almighty and Eternal Being you have for your maker and guardian; who, without any advice or assistance diffused the immense extent of heaven, and laid the groundwork of this solid earth! and have distressed yourselves with continual fears from day to day, that the raging tyrant who was eager and ready to do it, was, with God's promise that you should be delivered from him, also able and certain to destroy you, your danger will be of no long duration: for when I shall once arise to contend with him, what will the most savage oppressor's power or fury avail him: no more set against me than dust in the balance, and the meereft vanity.

14. The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he shall not die

The time is drawing near, ¹⁴ when this afflicted people, who at present are miserable captives, shall

SECT. 68. shall recover their liberty : they shall not utterly perish in those gloomy prisons where they have been long confined : nor shall they want a sufficient allowance of necessary provision, either in their servitude, or their return to their native country.

Isa. li.

14

15 That my power is adequate for these purposes will not be questioned by any who considers what I have done in antient times : that by a strong east-wind I divided the flowing waters of the *Red Sea*, with its roaring waves, for a passage to the *Israelites* as on dry ground : by my command their unruly force was broken that they stood in heaps : abundantly sufficient are the attributes of the sovereign spirit, for an absolute government, an universal jurisdiction.

die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

15. But I *am* the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared : the Lord of hosts *is* his name.

16 And as to you, my prophet, the people may be fully satisfied of the promises you make in my name : it is my word which you speak, that I have directed and in the express terms that I have dictated : my protection also will be your security against all imaginable enemies, so that in the deliverance and restoration of the *Jews*, there will most certainly happen such a change, as if

16. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto *Zion*, thou art my people.

if I had produced a new heaven and a new earth: and that the inhabitants of Zion, who seemed so long estranged from me, are, as is declared, again become my people.

SECT. 68.

Isa. li.
16

17. Awake, awake, stand up, O *Jerusalem*, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury: thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.

18. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand, of all the sons that she has brought up.

O you who dwell in the city *Jerusalem*, be aroused from the depths of misery, to experience the most pleasing difference; do you no longer lie down afflicted and disconsolate, but awake and arise: you have been punished with a just but great severity; as it were drunken the whole cup of divine displeasure, with the dregs of that bitter cup, squeezed out; even the full portion of wrath and misery, that the offended Majesty hath measured out for you. Among all the celebrated characters that this city hath given birth to, there was not one in her late extremity, to lend her an helping hand, and either direct or support, counsel or comfort her from either the royal line, or the *Levitical* function.

17 & 18

19. These two things are come unto thee: who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?

Which is a great addition to your complicated sufferings, there is no one that sympathizes with, or has any feeling for you: these two evils have befallen you, that your country is desolate, and your people destroyed by

SECT. 68. by war and famine ; and nobody
 discovers the least compassion or
 condolence for your miseries ;
 by whom then shall I support or
 comfort you under your mighty
 and unparalleled griefs ?

Isa. li.

19
 20 The youth and flower of your
 nation are themselves starved
 and ready to perish, therefore
 can afford you no support or
 consolation : you find them in
 the entrance of the streets of
 every part of the city lying in a
 weak and languishing condition,
 as destitute both of food and ha-
 bitations ; the most strong and
 vigorous of them can do no more
 than agitate and torment, not
 extricate themselves ; under the
 just displeasure of incensed Om-
 nipotence, and the severe checks
 of his providence, they strive,
 toil, and rage being full of an-
 guish and vexation, like a wild
 bull taken in the huntsman's
 toils.

21, 22, Therefore give me a diligent
 & 23 attention thou who art to that de-
 gree afflicted as to be almost
 senseless and stupid ; but not owing
 to the intoxicating fumes of strong
 wine ; thus hath the Almighty
 declared his kind intentions who
 espouseth your interest : you shall
 no more drink the vials of my
 wrath, nor longer conflict with
 this

20. Thy sons have
 fainted, they lie at
 the head of all the
 streets, as a wild bull
 in a net : they are
 full of the fury of
 the Lord, the rebuke
 of thy God.

21. Therefore hear
 now this, thou af-
 flicted and drunken,
 but not with wine.

22. Thus saith thy
 Lord, the Lord, and
 thy God, that plead-
 eth the cause of his
 people, Behold, I
 have taken out of
 thine hand the cup of
 trembling, even the
 dregs of the cup of my
 fury

fury, thou shalt no more drink it again.

23. But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee: which have said to thy soul, bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over.

this weight of misery : you shall not continue in slavery to *Chaldean tyrants*, nor shall be treated with such unheard of savageness of inhumanity and cruelty: merciless hands shall inflict on them, the intolerable distresses you have undergone ; their haughty conquerors shall trample upon them, and use them at their pleasure with the same contempt and outrage, as they have behaved to you, in the long and tedious course of your cruel bondage ; nor shall they dare, in such dispirited conditions, any more than you did, to mutter a complaint.

SECT. 68

Isa. li.

21, 22, & 23

CHAP.

CHAP. LII. SECT. LXIX.

Jews to prepare for their deliverance as for some festival. Babylonians had no right to detain them. Former oppressions referred to. End of their captivity declared and greatly rejoiced in. Divine perfection displayed in the manner of his people's departure. Transcendent merit of his servant. Character of the Messiah, supposed to begin at the 13th. verse, and to be continued through several following chapters.

Isa. lii. 1 & 2.

SECT. 69. **I** Am extremely happy, O ye children of the captivity, in being, by express warrant from the Great Sovereign, the messenger to you of the most acceptable intelligence: be excited to revive your courage, to put off your squalid and mournful ones, and be cloathed in neat and clean garments; uncircumcised and polluted heathens shall not be suffered very soon again to invade, enslave, and oppress you. Shake yourselves from the dust of the feet of those disdainful tyrants who have trampled upon your prostrate bodies: continue no longer in that contemptuous posture: sit down in an easy and comfortable state: and, O ye captives from mount Zion, throw off the heavy yoke of intolerable servitude, that so long

Isa. lii. 1 & 2.

A Wake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised, and the unclean.
2. Shake thyself from the dust: arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

long has burdened your galled necks. SECT. 69.

Ifa. lii.

3. For thus saith the Lord, ye have sold yourselves for nought: and ye shall be redeemed without money.

Your redemption is certain,³ nor will any power on earth pretend to keep you in bondage, if I challenge my just right in you as my peculiar people: for thus hath the Supreme Ruler declared, you have, by your transgressions, sold yourselves, and provoked me to deliver you up to be punished: but I never made over my title, nor received any price for the sale of you from the *Babylonians*: therefore they have no just claim to your service, but shall be obliged, upon my requiring it, to set you at liberty without any ransom.

4. For thus saith the Lord God, my people went down aforetime into *Egypt* to sojourn there, and the *Assyrians* oppressed them without cause.

5. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord, and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

My people are not without for-4 & 5 mer instances of an extraordinary interposition of providence to ground their hopes of future: for thus saith the Lord and Supreme Governor, in ancient times they went down into *Egypt* to sojourn there; and being greatly distressed from a growing jealousy in an haughty monarch of their prevailing strength and numbers, were at length delivered by a series of miracles. The same Almighty power was displayed in their favour, when the *Assyrian* without just occasion grievously oppressed them. What

SECT. 69. is there in the affair that is present before mine eyes? What price has been paid me, or what benefit have I gained, that I should spare *Babylon*, and defer to rescue them from a most ignominious and tedious bondage, to reinhabit their own desolate country; they did not purchase before they carried the children of *Israel* away captives: they rule them with a rod of iron; in the bitterest cries they bewail their hard fate; and my name, faith the peerless *Jehovah*, is incessantly blasphemed, and my perfection questioned, as if either I was not able or not willing to restore their liberty.

Isa. lii.
4 & 5

6 My character shall certainly be vindicated, and my people, to their pleasing experience, know that I am the Great *JEHOVAH*, my majesty most glorious, my power boundless, and my faithfulness unfailing; in that very day that I have appointed for their deliverance, they shall be fully convinced, that it was I the Lord who foretold it, and do most punctually to the minutest circumstance, perform the prediction by my prophet.

6. Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak, behold it is I.

The

7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet ^c of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation that faith unto *Zion*, thy God reigneth.

8. Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again *Zion*.

9. Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of *Jerusa-*

The message how agreeable, ^{SECT. 69.} the person respectable, and even ^{Isa. lli.} his feet journeying on the mountains near *Jerusalem*, amiable and beautiful; who is dispatched to carry the transporting intelligence of the people's approaching restoration; to declare to them peace and prosperity, even *Cyrus's* most welcome grant of universal liberty; ascertaining it that they still enjoy the divine protection and government, and that their enemies are extirpated.

The joyful report which the watchmen stationed in the several towers round the city, shall hear from the messengers, they shall proclaim in exalted strains, and behold the people crouding to their former abodes; with united voices in extacies of pleasure shall they sing, when they see with their own eyes, countrymen, friends and relations meeting one another face to face, and once more conducted to the secure and pleasing possession of mount *Zion*.

As if animated, expresses an high pleasure, O ye streets of *Jerusa-*

^c Feet, &c. There is a beauty or elegance in this expression, that is enhanced as to the Eastern countries, where the people wore sandals, and their feet soon became dusty or dirty with travelling, so that they were obliged frequently to wash them; but are represented as improved and rendered beautiful and elegant as to their form, on account of the good tidings those brought who used them.

SECT 69. *Jerusalem* and whole land of
 Judea, that after seventy years
 Ifa. lli. desolation, you shall be rebuilt,
 9 inhabited and cultivated: this
 will follow from the pleasing in-
 telligence now afforded the pe-
 culiar people, the wonderful re-
 demption performed for their
 city and country.

10 In this event, the Lord and
 rector of the universe, hath sig-
 nalized his arm of Almighty
 power before astonished nations;
 like some great general, who
 manifests his personal valour by
 making bare and stretching out
 a sinewy and strong arm; the
 extremities of the earth must
 consider the favours he hath
 vouchsafed, as redounding to the
 transcendent glory of his Infinite
 Majesty.

11 Prepare in the properest man-
 ner, as continual expectants of
 the joyful grant of king *Cyrus*,
 to depart from this idolatrous
 place; be purified from all legal
 uncleanness, neither though you
 have long lived in the midst of
 them, be polluted with its su-
 perstitious rights or immoral
 customs: let the priests and Le-
 vites, whose function it is to
 carry back the consecrated vessels
 and several utensils belonging to
 the temple, be particularly solici-
 tous to preserve themselves free
 from

Jerusalem; for the
 Lord hath comforted
 his people, he hath
 redeemed *Jerusalem*.

10. The Lord hath
 made bare his holy
 arm in the eyes of
 all the nations, and
 all the ends of the
 earth shall see the
 salvation of our God,

11. Depart ye, de-
 part ye, go ye out
 from thence, touch
 no unclean thing, go
 ye out of the midst
 of her; be ye clean
 that bear the vessels
 of the Lord.

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from all ceremonial and moral SECT. 69.
defilement and abomination.

Ifa. lii.

12

12. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord *will* go before you: and the God of *Israel will be* your rereward.

Your ancestors, by a precipitate flight, left *Egypt*, before a pursuing enemy; but your removal shall be in the utmost order and regularity from *Babylon*, and unaccompanied with any difficulties or dangers: with full permission from the sovereign Ruler, you shall take final leave of that strange country: and the Almighty Being, whose supreme pleasure it is that your liberty should be restored, graciously vouchsafe you his support and conduct: as the pillar of a cloud and fire formerly surrounded to guide and defend your forefathers, so will your God protect and guard you.

13. ^d Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

My servant, further, whom I ¹³ shall delegate to the important office of redeeming my people, shall appear perfectly to understand the business he is employed in, and most punctually to observe my instructions: wisdom

O 2

in

^d Behold my servant, &c. Cyrus is thus stiled; but some interpreters understand the prophet as here entering upon a new subject, and as pointing in this and the next chapter at the *Messiah*. Deal prudently, *Capellus* renders the original, *doerbit, instruet, erudiet*. Thus a title is formed and given to several psalms, as *eminently useful*, or *peculiarly instructive*. The *Vulgate* interprets *intelliget*, i. e. *shall understand*; and *Sanctius* supposes *intelliget* put for *obediet*; *shall observe* or *obey*.

SECT. 69. in the highest degree shall be significantly displayed in every instance of his management; even a transcendent merit, and character deserving of universal esteem and admiration.

Isa. lii.

13

14. Nothing, O my messenger, of a superior nature and excellence shall be conspicuous in thy first stages of life: the generality shall be surprized at thy obscure and low estate: his aspect and external qualities, they will remark, were enough despicable and seemingly ill-suited to his great designs; and he lived amongst men much neglected and degraded.

15

The world could not be more surprized at his small beginning and mean original, than they were afterwards amazed at his rapid progress and signal exaltation, his mighty works, and to how many nations his favours and blessings extended: as the rain showers down, or the trickling dews distil to water the earth, so diffusive and beneficial an influence did he shed all abroad: heathen princes shall only be able in silence to express their admiration of his true greatness and noblest sublimity: those predictions they shall see accomplished, of which they had no previous

14. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.

15. So shall he sprinkle many nations, the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see: and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Str

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way
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previous notice; and be led seriously to consider inestimable favours of which they had never before heard.

SECT. 69.
Isa. lii.
15

CHAP. LIII. SECT. LXX.

Strange incredulity of the Jews respecting the servant of the Lord, in part accounted for from his obscure birth and mean condition. His indignities and sufferings: his commiseration to the distressed of mankind. His patience under heavy affliction, from the violence and inhumanity of his enemies and persecutors. The issue a cruel and ignominious death. His sacrifice, the voluntary effect of his firm and unshaken testimony to the truth. The prevalence of his truth; the success of his labours, the recompence of his sorrows. His intercession for transgressors.

Isa liii. 1.

WHO hath believed, our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

Isa. liii. 1.

ALL rational circumstances of an universal credibility have attended them, yet may not we, God's prophets and messengers, lamenting the matter, enquire, who hath given credit to

SECT. 70.
Isa. liii.
1

O 3

our

^e *Who hath believed, &c. In his true grounds, &c. p. 110.* Mr. Jeffery hath observed that the accomplishment of this prophecy could not be the end the Jews proposed in their unbelief, and consequently the expression interpreted, *that it might be fulfilled* must be rendered, the saying of *Isaiah* the prophet was plainly fulfilled and verified in them: which may be applied to several other passages, and shews how precarious that remark of Mr. Pierce is, by which he would make that phrase an argument, that the scripture introduced is quoted, not in any instance by way of accommodation, but always according to its original design and literal meaning.

SECT. 70. our reports and declarations ?

Isa. liii.

1 and to whom have extraordinary and miraculous works appeared in their just and true light, and been regarded as performed by the mighty power of God? Alas! in comparison, to a very inconsiderable and small number.

2 Their diffidence with respect to a person of the most exalted dignity in the sacred function, shall arise from their mistaken notions of his external condition; and what secular pomp is requisite in one who is divinely commissioned. He shall not, like the tree in *Nebuchadnezzar's* vision, grow up immediately and be strong, the height whereof reacheth unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth; but as a weak and sickly plant, or slender poor sucker, shooting from a decayed and almost sapless stock in a dry and barren soil: he hath no remarkable character or grand appearance that command deference: no visible dignity and stateliness in his mein and air, that shew a noble birth or royal parentage, and demand our reverence; no extraordinary symmetry and beauty that engage our affection.

2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant; and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him *there is* no beauty, that we should desire him.

Personal

3. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Personal aversions and prejudices, however easily taken up, and frequently upon slight grounds, are apt to increase: we sought not his acquaintance; his associates were sufferings, pain, and grief; and we who are too much devoted to mirth and pleasure, shunned his company. We further proceeded to treat him with neglect and contempt: through the course of his life he was rejected as mean and worthless, and we turned our faces from him; were ashamed to look at, or be seen with so disagreeable an object; the leading men of our nation affected to degrade and reproach him; we implicitly followed, and did not respect or esteem him.

SECT 70.

Isa. lili.

3

4. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Such a tenderness of pity to sympathize, and readiness to relieve, appeared in the multitude of his miraculous cures; as if he had voluntarily undertaken to bear away, as a kind of burden, the various miseries of this mortal life; yet we were absurd enough to ascribe all to his demerit; his guilty reflections, and reckon his sufferings the just punishment of his enormous transgressions.

SECT. 70.

Isa. liii.

Our sentiments of this excellent person, were greatly mistaken, and our censures of him most uncharitable and unjust : it was not owing to any wickedness he had done, but entirely our fault, that he was thus ill-treated and most cruelly persecuted : the prevalence of iniquity, and all instances of a prevaricating vice, truly occasioned, that so generous an advocate for virtue and piety, was wounded and bruised ; and if we are so affected with his innocent sufferings, as to receive his instructions and observe his laws, the chastisement he underwent for his constancy in espousing the truth, purity, and sincerity of religion, will be an happy means of our safety, peace, and prosperity : his unexampled patience under the heavy strokes of a most vile malignity, of our health and happiness.

6 The age in which he lived, was an extremely degenerate and corrupt one ; the righteous were so few, that it may not improperly be said, that we all, like lost sheep, had wandered from the ways prescribed us ; some following his own foolish inventions of one kind, some of another : and the Lord, in appointing him to bear testimony to the excel-

5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

6. All we like sheep have gone astray : we have turned every one his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

excellence of wisdom, subjected him to undergo the most unworthy treatment, as if he had been a real criminal. SECT. 70.
 Ifa. liii.

7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Nothing could well equal his sufferings, but the amazing constancy with which he sustained them: under scenes of a complicated distress, a most violent oppression, and savage persecution; he betrayed no impatience, vehemence of temper, or horror of passion; as an harmless and inoffensive lamb goeth gently and quietly to be slaughtered; with such calmness and serenity, did he submit to the most tragical circumstances: as an innocent and undisturbed sheep, is silent and dispassionate before her shearers, who deprive her of her fleecy covering, sometimes pierce her tender skin, he neither resisted nor clamoured, when he knew that he was designed for and hastened to a public execution.

8. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? for

Most precipitate, severe, and partial were the proceedings of the Jews against him: they seize him with tumult and outrage:

† *Declare his generation?* In his Essay upon our Saviour's Divine Mission, p. 57. the learned and accurate Dr. Fleming observes, that this hath been misunderstood, and urged as a proof of our Saviour's ineffable and eternal generation. Whereas it is evident that the prophet here is only painting the wickedness of his people, and intimating their impious and unexampled beha-

SECT. 70.

Ma. liii.

rage: they detain him with insults and outcries: and procure a most iniquitous sentence in a court of judicature, to be pronounced and executed upon him: and what language can describe the inhumanity and horrid cruelty of that most corrupt and hypocritical generation: for in his case it is apparent, that a person of spotless innocence and the most exalted merit, underwent a most ignominious and painful death, owing to an enormous envy, perfidy and prejudice.

9 It is further observable, that to load him with the heaviest reproaches in his untimely exit, he was associated with malefactors, and men of the vilest character; whose capital sentence, the common safety required at the hands of public justice: and his remains deposited, by a man of fortune and character, in a sepulchre designed for his own: since

for he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

behaviour towards him, as past or above all description. We all, says he, know what his generation was, when we apply the terms to his formation by the immediate power of God in the womb of his mother: but the iniquity and ingratitude of his people or his country towards him is beyond all conception.

g *His grave*, &c. A transposition, as the learned Dr. Kennicot hath observed, here seems necessary to be allowed; and that *kibro* and *bemothan* have changed places, owing to a slip in the transcriber; that the rendering therefore should be, And he was taken up with wicked men in his death; and with a rich man was his sepulchre. *Hist. of the Heb. Text.* p. 372.

since he had given no just cause SECT 70
of offence by any acts of vio- Isa. llii.
lence, nor spoken any thing but
that important truth, to which
God had commissioned him, at
all events, to yield his unvaried
testimony.

10. Yet it pleas-
ed the Lord to ^h bruise
him, he hath put *him*
to grief: when thou
shalt make his soul
an offering for sin, he
shall see *his* seed, he
shall prolong *his* days,
and the pleasure of
the Lord shall prof-
per in his hand.

In his inflexible endeavours ¹⁰
to reform religion to its original
standard of truth, purity, and
simplicity; the Lord suffered
him to give weight to what he
delivered, by undeniable proofs
of his own sincerity; and the
most humiliating scenes of pain
and grief: when, all-adored Be-
ing, thou shalt admit him, to
make as it were, himself an of-
fering for sin, and bleed and
die, and in all respects be dealt
with for the kindest service, as
if guilty of the most atrocious
crimes: his superior merit shall
shine forth; his divine instructi-
ons be received; and his followers
multiplied: in the prevalence
of his doctrine, his reign may
be said to be long and glorious;
the great designs of heaven
and providence succeeded; and
count-

^h *Bruise him*, A probable allusion to some most inhuman and
disdainful customs of the Eastern monarchs and generals, who,
alas! forgetful how uncertain are the events of war, and in-
deed all human greatness, to grace their triumphs usually di-
rected some of the noblest of their prisoners to be dragged at
their chariot-wheels; or brought forth into their presence, that
they might tread on their necks, or walk over their bodies.

SECT. 70. countless numbers converted and
 saved.

Isa. liii.

11 His constant and indefatigable labours, in their noble fruit shall afford him a divine pleasure; when thousands and ten thousands, by the convictions of reason, and the knowledge of true religion, shall be effectually engaged to believe in his name, follow his steps, and obey his laws: so that my faithful servant shall be the instrument to multitudes of their greatest happiness, perfection of virtue, and final acceptance; such long forbearance and patience shall he shew to their offences and provocations; that if they have the least ingenuity, it will appear in the godly sorrow of an unfeigned repentance, and future uniform obedience.

12 Such important service, for my glory, shall not pass unrewarded: as a victorious brave general, after he has defeated the enemy divides the spoil among his triumphant forces: so will I distribute to my messenger, after all his conflicts, a distinguishing portion: he hath richly merited it: he hath voluntarily resigned himself to a most ignominious and untimely fate: as if he had deserved the greatest

11. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities.

12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

S
not
into
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for
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than
the
faith

greatest weight of misery and sufferings; he was, for the benefit of mankind, numbered with robbers and murderers: and as if he had taken up and born away the burden of their sins, he hath ascertained forgiveness and mercy to all that timely and effectually repent: to perfect his character, he moreover, with his dying breath interceded for the cruel perpetrators of his pain and death,

SECT. 70.

Isa. liii.

12

CHAP. LIV. SECT. LXXI.

Occasion of rejoicing from the increase of the people: the offended Deity propitious and reconcileable: his indignation momentary: his loving-kindness everlasting: the deluge an instance. The waters of the flood soon withdrawn; but the engagement that it should never return remains firm and unshaken. Promises of further signal and perpetual favours.

Isa. liv. 1.

SING, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

Isa. liv. 1.

RECEIVE my affectionate congratulations, saith the Prophet, and exalt your voices in joyful songs, O ye peculiar people, on occasion of the happiest changes in your circumstances; who in time past have been reduced to a small number, but now shall greatly increase and multiply. You have truly resembled a woman who was almost

SECT. 71.

Isa. liv.

1

SECT. 71. most childless; but hereafter,

Isa. liv.

they who seemed destitute as to
 1 an offspring, shall bear more
 children than those who have
 been long married, and in regu-
 lar order conceived and brought
 forth.

2 Prepare every thing that will
 be requisite for a great and visi-
 ble augmentation and populous-
 ness; as in ancient times, when
 you dwelt in tabernacles, grow-
 ing numbers demanded larger
 tracts of land, and curtains that
 might be extended to a greater
 compass: the cords that they
 were lengthened, and the stakes
 or posts that they were strong to
 which they were fastened, in or-
 der to support them.

3 There will be great want of
 an enlarged region, and scarce
 room to be found for all the peo-
 ple; so replenished shall your
 cities be, and your country on
 all sides crouded: your posterity
 shall enjoy towns which the hea-
 thens at present possess; and
 glad shall they be to repair and
 inhabit those which your enemies
 have left in a condition of ruin
 and desolation.

2. Enlarge the
 place of thy tent, and
 let them stretch forth
 the curtains of thine
 habitation; spare not,
 lengthen thy cords,
 and strengthen thy
 stakes.

3. For thou shalt
 i break forth on the
 right hand and on the
 left; and thy seed
 shall inherit the Gen-
 tiles, and make the
 desolate cities to be
 inhabited.

Mea-

i *Break forth*, a strong and emphatic expression, probably in
 allusion to children's breaking forth from the womb; as is said
 of Pharez. Gen. xxviii. 29. Or to granaries and store-houses
 over-filled, so that the floor breaks down, or the walls give way.
 Prov. iii. 10.

4. Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more

5. For thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of Hosts is his name) and thy redeemer the holy One of *Israel*, the God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Measure not your future prosperity by your present circumstances, nor question from calamitous scenes the accomplishment of promises: wait with patience, hope and trust with an unshaken confidence, and you shall not be disappointed; but delivered, restored and greatly multiplied. For a season you may be neglected, like a marriageable young woman, whom no one has betrothed; or desolate as a widow without husband or children; yet so great and signal shall your advantages and honours shortly be, as to bury in oblivion your former infelicities and reproaches.

Much surpassing as to affection, the tenderest respect of a most faithful husband, and certain of all tokens of an entire regard, are your expectations from the relative character and perfect benevolence of the Supreme Being: to all purposes as a Maker, Guardian, Preserver and Redeemer, the Almighty stands peculiarly connected with the children of *Israel*; and shall be acknowledged for their Supreme Governor by all nations and languages of this whole wide extended world.

You

SECT. 71.
Isa. liv.

SECT. 71.

Ma. liv.

6 You are again received into favour, who from some temporary severities in the dispensations of providence seemed rejected; like a woman put away from her offended husband, who when he beholds her extreme anguish and desolate state, relents, takes her again, and becomes as tender of her, as he had been in the flower of her youth; such reconciliation, faith your God, and renewed affection, shall you experience in the father of lights and fountain of all goodness.

7 You might be tempted from some necessary discipline to reckon yourselves neglected and forsaken: but must think otherwise when you recollect for how short a space of time this continued: whilst I have with signal and distinguishing favours and those of the longest duration gathered you together.

8 If owing to your grossest errors and provoking carriage, I appeared a little displeased, and refused my concurrence with your undertakings; and in some small degree of resentment, as it were, hiding my face that you should not see me; it was transient, momentary

6. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, faith thy God.

7. ^k For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.

8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, faith the Lord thy redeemer.

^k For a small moment, &c. A most affecting tender pathos is surely observable in this passage, a natural and noble dignity and sublimity.

momentary, or as the beating of a pulse; but upon your professions of repentance I was early appeased and most perfectly, so as to shew compassion, grant privileges, and continue the most important blessings for a long succession of years, saith the Lord, your Preserver and Defender.

SECT. 71.

Isa. liv.

9. For this *is* as the waters of *Noah* unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of *Noah* should no more go over the earth: so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee.

This my engagement is similar to that I entered into with *Noah*; for as I gave him my certain promise, which is equally binding as my most solemn oath, that the earth should never more be overwhelmed with a deluge of waters; so have I sworn to my people, that if a series of the greatest abominations do not extort vengeance, you shall never again be involved in calamities, like those you have undergone during the seventy years of a *Babylonish* captivity.

10. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

Sooner shall the heavy mountains be wrested from their ancient seats, and thrown at the greatest distance; and the bulky hills shaken and overturned from their firm and settled basis; (these stupendous outworks of nature shall sometime suffer strange convulsions and revolutions) than my affectionate regard and concern fail to insure your safety, peace and happiness, saith the

SECT. 71. the Great and Blessed God, who
 {
 Isa. liv. will unquestionably perform his
 promises of mercy.

11 & 12 O my greatly afflicted and distressed people, you have unpitied and unsuccoured, endured extreme hardships; your enemies in their repeated attacks have rendered your once populous and splendid city, like a poor weather-beaten cottage: your tribes are either captives or fugitives in foreign lands, and your state properly compared to a ship driven with tempestuous winds in a swelling sea; it is not long that you shall continue in these deplorable circumstances, before I retrieve your ancient prosperity and glory: cause your houses to be rebuilt in such beauty and splendour, as if they consisted only of precious stones, and their ground-work or pavement of sapphires: your windows make to glitter as of agates; your gates look glorious as of carbuncles, and the walls not more strongly cemented and compact, than they are beautiful and pleasant.

13 Which is still more interesting and of the greatest importance, in order to cultivate the minds and morals of a growing posterity; the Lord, by a succession of

11. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest *and* not comforted: Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

12. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13. And all thy children *shall be* taught of the Lord, and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

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15
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of rational and exemplary in-^{SECT. 71.}
 structors, shall teach them in
 the simplest and plainest manner ^{Isa. liv.}
 just sentiments of virtue and pie-¹³
 ty: and conforming their prac-
 tice to them, they shall, in all
 respects, enjoy considerable de-
 grees of happiness and prospe-
 rity.

14. In righteous-
 ness shall thou be es-
 tablished: thou shalt
 be far from oppres-
 sion, for thou shalt
 not fear; and from
 terror, for it shall
 not come near thee.

The foundation is a most sub-¹⁴
 stantial and fixed one for the sta-
 bility, welfare, and splendour of
 your state, in the prevalence of
 wisdom and righteousness a-
 mongst all ranks; in governors,
 whether supreme or subordinate,
 and in all orders and stations of
 the people: so far from feeling,
 you shall have no occasion to
 fear the iron hand of tyrannical
 oppressors at home, nor the
 alarms of invasions from abroad:
 high and low, rich and poor,
 shall habitually act as reason and
 conscience dictate, and enjoy the
 protection and regard of the in-
 visible and eternal JEHOVAH.

15. Behold they shall
 surely gather together
but not by me; who-
 soever shall gather
 together against thee,
 shall fall for thy sake.

Enemies you may expect to¹⁴
 have, and such as conspire and
 unite, if they had power, to des-
 troy you: my counsel directs
 them not, my providence con-
 curs not with them: therefore
 they shall not prosper, that you
 may not be harmed; they shall
 certainly fall: confederates to

SECT. 71. do you mischief shall find you so
 guarded that they themselves
 shall perish.

Isa. liv.

16 The most distant tendency in human affairs to animosity and contention is obvious to my all-discerning mind; the earliest efforts of turbulent men for mischief are under my direction, and subject to my controul: for instance, the smith himself is my production, who bloweth the coals and prepares his several working instruments to make arms and military weapons: he is disposed of at my pleasure, and easily over-ruled by my providence: I have also created the warrior who uses them, and sometimes do employ him in scenes of desolation to chastize the rebellious, and punish the disobedient; but he can do nothing at all without my knowledge, appointment, or permission.

17 My positive promise, therefore, may fully ascertain to you, that no armour intended for your slaughter shall be succeeded: and that whatever person shall bear false witness in a court of judicature against you, accuse you of crimes that you have not committed, or seek your ruin any way that you have not deserved,

16. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and I have created the waster to destroy.

17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

served, you shall be able to con-
front and expose, convict and
punish him. This is their pe-
culiar happiness, and settled on
them as their unalienable inheri-
tance or portion, by grant from
the most high God, who worship
and serve him in truth and sin-
cerity : it is a kind of perpetual
privilege which belongs to them;
and as to their character and pro-
bity, I charge myself with their
vindication, saith a most just and
holy God.

SECT. 71.

Isa. liv.

17

C H A P.

CHAP. LV. SECT. LXXII.

The most signal advantages proposed to the acceptance of the seed of Jacob. Unprofitable pursuits blamed. Invitation to enter into an everlasting covenant. Person appointed to transact this affair. Gentiles called. Instruction how to eat, and repent so as become objects of mercy. The unspeakable happiness of acting in this manner exemplified.

Isa. lv. 1.

SECT. 72.

Isa. lv.

EVERY good and perfect gift is positively promised by a God of truth to his faithful servants: suffer me then to awaken their attention as to the appointed means of obtaining it: and in resemblance of him who cries provisions in the open streets to supply their natural wants, excite them diligently to attend for accommodations to their spiritual moral ones: and whatever be their sex or age, station or condition, seek their own chiefest good, and what concerns their nourishment for a future life and eternal salvation.

2. Why so much dilatoriness here, and trifling expence of your substance and fruits of your industry for that which is not bread, cannot support life, nor nourish and improve to their maturity and perfection such natures and faculties

Isa. lv. 1.

HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; yea come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.

2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let

let your soul delight
itself in fatness.

culties as you are possessed of: SECT. 72
to guard against these dangerous mistakes, be persuaded to ob-
serve my instructions, and
thoroughly digest them for your
good, as the richest food: in-
dulge to satiety and luxury in
that which will conciliate the di-
vine regard, enoble your minds,
and issue in your endless blessed-
ness.

3. Incline your
ear, and come unto
me: hear and your
soul shall live, and I
will make an ever-
lasting covenant with
you, *even* the sure
mercies of *David*.

Being an affair of the last im-
portance, I repeat, and most
earnestly urge, that you will di-
ligently attend, come near, and
be fully informed of the doctrine
in all its parts and branches, that
leads to satisfaction and happi-
ness, here and hereafter: you
have violated former covenants,
or you had never known *Babyloni-
sh* servitude: I will enter into a
fresh and perpetual engagement,
and upon certain reasonable and
easy terms grant you the noblest
privileges; and with the fullest
certainty of your long enjoying
them, confirm to you such mercies
as were promised to king *David*.

4. Behold, I have
given him for a wit-
ness to the people, a
leader and command-
er to the people.

As I formerly raised the son
of *Jesse* to the throne of *Israel*,
so the Lord declares, have I ap-
pointed the servant, whom I will
send to bear a noble testimony to
the people, respecting religion:
by his example and instructions
he shall lead them in the true

SECT. 72. way of life and happiness; and
 { his commands have annexed to
 Isa. lv. them the most awful eternal sanc-
 4 tions.

5 O my messenger, observe what shall be the joyful consequences of thy mission: thou shalt make converts of a nation, that thou didst not regard as united with my people: and nations who knew nothing of thee, shall make haste to form an acquaintance: on this important occasion, the Almighty shall vouchsafe to display his attributes, demonstrative of him as the only living and true God: and in a series of astonishing works clearly manifest his presence and concurrence.

6 Whoever you are, that sincerely desire to reap benefit by this admirable provision, do you speedily embrace and diligently improve the present opportunity and encouragement; to obtain true knowledge, practise virtue and piety, and secure the greatest blessings.

7, 8, & 9 To sinners, the indispensable condition of pardon and acceptance is repentance, proved to be sincere and effectual by amendment: let the wicked be reformed from those evil courses he has habitually prosecuted; and the unrighteous changed, as
 to

5. Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the holy one of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8. For my thoughts
are not your thoughts,
neither *are* your ways
my ways, saith the
Lord.

9. For as the hea-
vens are higher than
the earth, so are my
ways higher than
your ways, and my
thoughts than your
thoughts.

10. For as the
rain cometh down,
and the snow from
heaven,

to the bent of his desires and SECT 72.
prevalence of inordinate affec-
tions; and let him be fully re-
conciled to the future observance
of God's laws; and he may chear-
fully confide in his goodness and
mercy, that the greatest misery
shall be prevented; and multi-
plied transgressions not punished
as they deserve. You are natu-
rally led to form these sentiments
from the infinite disproportion
there is betwixt God and man;
and consequent great difference
in the measures of their actions.
to this purpose, saith the Lord,
my thoughts and ways of shew-
ing compassion to those who
have offended me, are not the
same with those of men to them
who have disobliged them: the
distance betwixt heaven and earth
is not greater than the difference
betwixt my procedure and
theirs. They frequently re-
quire a very low submission and
large compensation: are ready
to revive old animosities, and by
reflection render themselves in-
exorable in their resentments:
if they are only amended I for-
give, and if they consult their
own interest, perfection, and
happiness, am entirely satisfied.

The following easy and natu-
ral similitude may illustrate my
transl-

Ifa. lv.
7, 8, & 9.

10 & 11

SECT. 72. transcendency of goodness and
 {
 Isa. lv.
 10 & 11
 readiness to shew mercy, with
 the certainty of my promises : as
 the showers of rain and fleeces of
 snow fall not without producing
 the effects for which providence
 hath designed them ; and pre-
 paring and disposing the earth,
 that in its future crops it may
 yield men plenty of bread-corn
 for food, and a sufficiency of
 seed for the ensuing season : so
 shall my declarations of the
 terms of acceptance by my ser-
 vants the prophets, and of for-
 giveness to all that truly repent,
 be effectual to all the import-
 ant ends for which I have made
 them : and those reap advantage
 who are not wanting to them-
 selves, but chearfully embrace
 the offers, and perform the con-
 ditions.

12 You will early experience the
 signal advantages of an univer-
 sal reformation, by leaving with
 a peculiar pleasure the lonesome
 house of your tedious confine-
 ment in *Babylon*, and enjoying a
 safe and easy conduct to your
 native country : the revival of
 your spirits and an unusual chear-
 fulness shall make it seem as if
 the mountains and hills with rap-
 turous songs congratuled the re-
 covery of your liberty ; and the
 trees

heaven, and return-
 eth not thither, but
 watereth the earth,
 and maketh it bring
 forth and bud, that
 it may give seed to
 the sower, and bread
 to the eater :

11. So shall my
 word be that goeth
 forth out of my
 mouth : it shall not
 return unto me void,
 but it shall accom-
 plish that which I
 please, and it shall
 prosper in the thing
 whereto I sent it.

12. For ye shall
 go out with joy, and
 be led forth with
 peace : the mountains
 and the hills shall
 break forth before
 you into singing, and
 all the trees of the
 field shall clap their
 hands.

trees in the motion and waving SECT. 72.
of their branches, as it were Isa. lv.
clapping their hands, to applaud 12
your inexpressible happiness.

13. Instead of the
thorn shall come up
the fir-tree, and in-
stead of the briar shall
come up the myrtle
tree: and it shall be
to the Lord for a
name, for an ever-
lasting sign that shall
not be cut off.

You will be delighted to find 13
a mighty change, which you
hardly expected in your own
land; and that instead of being
desolate and overgrown with
briars and thorns; it shall prove
to have been cultivated, and
plentifully stocked with all use-
ful, pleasant and fruitful trees:
this extraordinary circumstance
you will consider as greatly re-
dounding to the glory of God;
a kind of lasting memorial or
perpetual monument of his power
and goodness to his people; to
remind and engage them through-
out all future ages and genera-
tions, to praise and to serve him.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVI. SECT. LXXIII.

Exhortation to the practice of an impartial justice, and the strictest equity. The happiness or blessedness of acting in this manner: Gentiles not debarred of the privileges if they discharged the duties of virtue and piety. The wicked among the Jews reprov'd, and threaten'd to be greatly distressed by foreign nations. Rulers both civil and ecclesiastical grossly ignorant and stupid, insatiably avaricious and devoted to sensual pleasures.

Isa. lvi. 1.

SECT. 73.
Isa. lvi.

MAN who was made upright is in the highest degree interested to preserve inviolate his integrity; this is the will of heaven, and thus saith a most righteous God, O my people, be careful both in your judicial proceedings and your private dealings to support the character of an impartial distinction, according to the moral differences; and to practise the strictest justice doing to all others as you would have them do to you; for the time draws near that I shall work for you a very signal deliverance, and approve myself to be righteous and faithful by performing most exactly my promises.

Isa lvi. 1.

THUS saith the Lord, keep ye judgment and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

Happy

2. Blessed is the man that doth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Happy in his own reflections, ^{SECT. 73.} the approbation of the great and blessed God, and the estimate of all wise and just persons, is the man who habitually acts in this manner; and the son of man who is zealous and constant in his adherence to that which is equal and right; who is diligent and conscientious in observing the sabbath for all the purposes for which it was appointed, and all the duties and exercises of God's worship and service; and takes due care of all his actions, that they be no way injurious or mischievous to his neighbour.

3. Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, the Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say behold I am a dry tree.

The effect and reward of this practice is not confined to any particular people; exclusive of others; the *Gentile* who professes true religion and uniformly acts answerably, has no occasion to conclude, saying, I am secluded or debarred of their privileges, because I am not of *Jewish* extraction, but of heathen parentage; neither let eunuchs on account of the mark of infamy fixed on them, reckon themselves utterly insignificant and rejected, because as a dry and barren

1 Utterly separated, &c. as is expressed, Deut. xxiii. 1, 2, &c. they should not enter into the congregation of the Lord, &c. i. e. they were not to be admitted to be magistrates, judges, or rulers of the people. 1 Chron. xxiv. 19. 2 Chron. i. 10. 1 Kings iii. 9. Psal. lxxxii. 1.

SECT. 73. barren tree cannot produce fruit,
 they happen to be disabled from
 contributing to population.

Isa. lvi.

4 & 5

• That they may not pain or grieve themselves in unfortunate cases where it is utterly out of their power to prevent or remedy, thus hath the Lord expressly declared to eunuchs, saying, those shall be accepted who religiously perform the offices of my worship, who give the preference to every thing that they believe will be acceptable to me; and who shew in their lives and conversations how firmly they have engaged themselves to obey my laws; even unto them will I give in my sanctuary on earth, and in my temple above the skies, greater honour and more lasting happiness than they could derive from an earthly posterity; the most glorious title of mine adopted children shall continue to distinguish them as truly eminent throughout all succeeding generations.

6 & 7

Foreigners also, who used to be admitted only into the court of the *Gentiles*, that unite and engage themselves to profess true religion, and come under the influence of its laws; observe as required the sabbath, and lay claim to its grant of privileges; shall

4. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant:

5. Even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

6. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it; and taketh hold of my covenant.

7. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

shall be conducted in one sacred communion, to bear a part in the solemnities performed in the temple on mount *Zion*; to enjoy the refined pleasure of a rational devotion, and a divine acceptance and approbation; for however narrow and contracted the minds of my people have been formerly in these matters; the time shall come, that agreeable to the nature and spirit of true religion, its institutions shall be free and open for men of all nations and languages, in order to learn and practise the duties of social worship, and the precepts of universal virtue.

SECT 73.
Isa. lvi.
6 & 7

8. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of *Israel*, faith, yet will I gather *others* to him, besides those that are gathered unto him.

It is the certain pleasure and express declaration of the most high God, the common parent and absolute lord of all, who gathereth together the exiles, captives, and dispersed *Israelites*, saying, yet will I collect and conjoin with them, *Gentiles* besides the *Jews* that I have brought from *Babylon*, and other countries where they were scattered abroad.

9. All ye beasts of the field, come to levour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.

The righteous may rejoice, exceeding great and precious promises are made, which shall in due season, be performed to them: but the ungodly and impenitent have no share in them, and

SECT. 73. and may be filled with terror
 and amazement: O ye beasts of
 Ifa. lvi.

9 prey from the field and the forest, come and devour the slaughtered carcases of this wicked people, who are every where sacrificed to the merciless cruelty of foreign invaders.

10 The blame is principally due to the leading persons, princes, priests, and pretended prophets, who are too blind and sottish to foresee and give warning of approaching evils and calamities: they are all themselves ignorant of God's laws and their duty, therefore incapable of directing and governing others; they are too much guilty also, to administer reproof, and damp the career or stem the torrent of vice and wickedness; they are wholly immersed in sloth and indolence, sensual pleasure and luxury.

11 They are further insatiably covetous, no gains or emoluments are esteemed sufficient to gratify them for their cares or labours; they may be compared to shepherds that are unacquainted with their office, and know not how to manage their flock; they understand not what belongs to their respective provinces, and are totally destitute of all publick spirit: they are universally

10. His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

11. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.

universally absorbed in private SECT. 73.
interest, and regard nothing but Isa. lvi.
their own advantage.

12. Come ye, *say*
they, I will fetch
wine, *and* we will
fill ourselves with
strong drink; and
to-morrow shall be
as this day, *and* much
more abundant.

They are moreover charged¹²
with rioting and drunkenness,
and the plain language of their
brutal excesses is, let the event
be what it will, we will indulge
ourselves and encourage one ano-
ther in taking the largest draughts
of intemperate pleasure: it is
our determinate resolution, what-
ever may be threatened by God's
prophets, neither do we question
our own security, and that we
shall be as happy to-morrow as
we are to-day, possibly happier,
if we do not retrench our desires,
nor give heed to any visionary
reports or romantic idle fears.

CHAP. LVII. SECT. LXXIV.

No concern expressed at the death of righteous and good men. Their happiness in being removed before the nation was involved in irretrievable destruction. Threatenings against that wicked generation. Their manifold idolatries. Judgments to be executed. The contrite and humble spared, and a stop put to rigorous proceedings. Peace, the fruit of their penitence and prayers. No peace to the wicked and impenitent.

Isa. lvii. 1.

SECT. 74

Isa. lvii.

I

AMIDST other threatening circumstances of our degenerate times, there is one that cannot well escape observation, and is greatly alarming; that is, the visible decrease and unlamented destruction of men distinguished for piety and virtue: those who are truly eminent for goodness, humanity and tenderness of mercy, are snatched away by an untimely fate; and yet none appears led by these usual tokens of impending judgments, to take warning, and seriously consider that these pillars of society are seasonably and graciously removed, that they may not be involved in the dreadful calamities that are shortly to befall an impenitent and incorrigible people and nation.

It

Isa. lvii. 1.

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

4.
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selves
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2. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, *each one walking in his uprightness.*

It shall be happy for them, the ^{SECT. 74.} commotions and distractions of ^{Ma. lvii.} a world lying in wickedness, shall ² no more affect them, but they shall be settled in a state of perfect ease and peace; they shall quietly rest till the great awakening day of a general resurrection in their silent graves: this shall be the pleasing lot of those who have served their God in truth and sincerity, and their generation well according to his will.

3. But draw near hither, ye sons of the forcerers, the seed of the adulterer, and the whore.

But your case will be very ³ different, and do you draw near to hear it described, who rejoice in surviving the regular and virtuous, and who are addicted to the wicked arts of sorcery and divination; who are guilty of the dissipating vices of adultery and fornication: who may call *Jerusalem* your mother, and glory in your being sprung from the patriarch *Abraham*, but are justly chargeable with profaneness, lewdness, and idolatry, as if you had descended from the vilest parents.

4. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? *are* ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?

It would do well for you to ⁴ consider, if reflection of mind as well as all decorum of manners have not forsaken you, at whose expence and neglect you make yourselves merry, express terms of derision, and use gestures of mockery; and whether it be not

SECT. 74. the Great and Eternal God,
 whom you insult and wound,
 through the sides of his prophets
 and servants, who are your faith-
 ful reprovers? Does not this be-
 haviour demonstrate you to be a
 most degenerate, false, and re-
 bellious race of men?

5 Agitating your limbs and fer-
 menting the blood and juices with
 the violent exercises, and im-
 pure and obscene rites you per-
 form to the honour of your
 idols in your shady groves; and
 on altars built under every green
 and spreading tree: with an un-
 natural and most horrid barba-
 rity sacrificing your own child-
 ren to *Baal* or *Moloch* in valleys,
 particularly in the infernal one of
Tophet or *Hinnom*; also in ca-
 vernous places under craggy
 rocks, that at the same time that
 they afford shelter, by their
 dreariness create a kind of me-
 lancholy gloom and enthusiastic
 horror.

6 On altars or in temples made
 of smooth and polished stones,
 and

5. m Inflaming your-
 selves with idols un-
 der every green tree,
 slaying the children
 in the valleys under
 the cliffs of the rocks.

6. Among the
 smooth stones of the
 stream is thy portion;
 they

m *Inflaming, &c.* The marginal reading is, *inflaming your-
 selves among the oaks*: that is, the groves where they sacrificed to
 their idol gods. *Smooth stones*, in the next verse, seems an al-
 lusion to a custom the Jews had of building their oratories, pro-
 secutives, or places of public prayer, near rivers, or by the sea-
 side, as *Tophet* and *Hinnom*, for the sake of purifications, which
 were practised also by the heathens respecting their solemn de-
 votions. *Eliner. Observ.* vol. i. page 430, 433. *Prid. Conn.*
 vol. i. page 387, 389.

they *are* thy lot; even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

and most pleasantly situated near murmuring streams, is your homage paid to your own greatest satisfaction and happiness: you esteem them as the richest inheritance, and as if these idols were really gods, you have endeavoured, with all kinds of offerings and sacrifices, to serve and please them: can you be so stupid as to imagine any one who is possessed of such attributes as I the true God am, can take delight in such things? or be otherwise than highly displeased with such abominations?

SECT. 74.

Isa. lvii.

7. Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

But to add still further to your abominations, you have been open, avowed, and impudent in committing them in your chapels, not only in caves and valleys, but on the tops of hills and mountains: these high places you have made witnesses of your uncleanness and wickedness.

8. Behind the doors also, and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance, for thou hast discovered *thyself to another* than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them; thou lovest their bed where thou sawest it.

Instead of inscribing my laws there, in an absolute contempt of them, you have set up memorials of your idols as your guardians and protectors, upon the doors and posts of your houses: have preferred them plainly before me, and forsaken my homage; like a most abandoned harlot, she is ready to expose her nakedness and prostitute herself to every one; you have, in

SECT. 74. the most public manner exposed

Isa. lvii. ⁸ your idolatry and superstition, have multiplied altars and temples, and have united yourselves with them by the most solemnities : wherever you have beheld an idol, you have been ready to worship it, to provide room for it, or to fashion one like it.

⁹ The enervating effects of this conduct, and fears in any danger, so as to seek for succour to foreign princes, early shewed how it degraded and unmanned : you applied to them with the richest presents : you courted their alliance by means of great quantities of costly spices : you have sent messengers to procure auxiliaries from distant countries ; in imploring their aid you have published your own utter inability, and descended to the lowest degree of a most abject mean-ness and pusillanimity.

¹⁰ You have submitted to the greatest fatigues by long and tedious journeys to remote parts : all this to no manner of purpose ; yet would you not be persuaded to desist from these vain projects,

⁹. And thou went-est to the ⁿ king with ointment ; and didst increase thy perfumes and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell.

¹⁰. Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way, yet saidst thou not, there is no hope ; o thou hast found the life of thine hand ; therefore thou wast not grieved.

ⁿ King, By a difference in the pointing this may be read *Moloch*, as not improbably it ought to be, then the discourse will be continued as having still a respect to their idolatries.

^o *Thou hast found, &c.* Thou hast made a shift by these methods to support thyself for the present, therefore thou dost not feel any remorse for thy evil and wicked practices. See *Lowth in Loc.*

jects, nor open your eyes to see ^{SECT 74} that you would never reap any ^{Isa. lvii.} benefit from them: you placed ¹⁰ your safety and welfare in the flattering promises of foreign princes; therefore you have scrupled no labour or expence to secure their friendship, and in the issue to be your own enemies and destroy yourselves.

11. And of whom hast thou been afraid, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old and thou fearest me not.

12. I will declare thy righteousness and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

Where has been your danger? ^{11 & 12} by whose thundering menaces have you been struck with terror, or what power on earth could make you in the least afraid, that you should violate all your most solemn engagements with me your God; never recollect what I have formerly done for you, nor seriously consider what was likely to be the consequence of behaving to me as if I was not able to protect and defend you: what but my silence and forbearance with your diffidence and contradiction to my laws have occasioned you to cast off my fear? Wherefore it is high time to shew my resentment; I am now determined to do it: to expose your righteousness as a most false and hypocritical one, and your works as vile and perfidious: whatever you may promise yourselves from them, they shall be so far from profiting you, that the prevalence

SECT. 74. lence of such wicked folly shall
 prove your bane and ruin.

Isa. lvii.

13 All the answer you can expect or shall receive, when you pray and cry to me, under the pressures of those judgments and calamities that are coming upon you, shall be, Let those heathen rulers, with the auxiliary forces they have promised, deliver you: alas! they will deceive you, when you look for their help, the wind as chaff will have driven them away: the smallest breeze of air will disperse them to the greatest distance: but he that, in the observance of my laws, wholly relies on my protection, shall be restored from bondage in *Babylon*, to possess again his native country, and enjoy all the privileges of religious worship in my temple upon my holy mountain.

14 And when, by order of *Cyrus*, they shall have liberty to return; directions shall be given for preparing the roads to render their travels easy and commodious: ways that are uneven to be made plain, and perfectly cleared of every thing of difficulty or impediment that would retard their journeys.

15 You who are made sensible of your past offences by your sufferings

13. When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee: but the wind shall carry *them* all away; vanity shall take *them*: but he that putteth his trust in me, shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.

14. And shall say, cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people.

15. For thus saith the high and lofty one
 tha

that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

ferings, and are reformed, may be comforted; need not question your redemption: for thus saith the truly eternal and immutable Being, by my supreme and incomprehensible Majesty, Holiness, and Glory; I dwell in Heaven, yet I regulate and govern all things here below: and if the sincerely penitent are so humbled and mortified for their sins, as to tremble at my word, and be afraid of approaching my presence; so infinite are my condescensions, that I will stoop to their infirmities, and come down to them, so as to dwell in their hearts, to revive and support them.

SECT. 74.
Isa. lvii.
15

16. For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.

With respect to those who are thus contrite and tender hearted, 'tis fit that a stop should be early put to rigorous proceedings; they want them not; they are unable to bear them, their spirits would faint away, and the souls, which are the work of my hands, to which therefore I have a desire, would be shocked, even overwhelmed with sorrow; life itself, which depends on a puff of air in their nostrils, be apt to forsake them and fly away.

17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth and smote him: I hid me and was wroth, and

My real displeasure was highly provoked by the enormous avarice and oppression and extortion of my people; and I executed some

SECT. 74. some severities upon them: I and he went on forwardly in the way of
 Isa. lvii. was offended and shewed that I his heart.

17 was, by not appearing in their favour, nor undertaking for their defence; which they did not sufficiently attend to, but proceeded in their usual course of an obstinate and unrestrained indulgence of their lusts and passions.

18 I cannot be unconcerned to see to what straits and difficulties, calamities and distresses, that infatuated and perverse course hath reduced them: the sight moves my pity, and I am resolved to provide remedies for the wounds that have been given them. I will also, by a most gracious providence, conduct them to their ancient habitations; they shall again enjoy all the comforts and blessings of their own fertile and pleasant land: those especially, who are sincerely afflicted for the terrible judgments their great wickedness hath brought upon them, shall be favoured with a peculiar consolation, manifest tokens that I am reconciled to them, and will yet be their God.

19 B. extraordinary interpositions of my providence in their favour, I will give them abundant occasion to open their lips, and exalt their voices in praises and

18. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.

19. I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him.

and thanksgivings. A long and uninterrupted peace and prosperity shall be vouchsafed both to those who have been carried away captives into a foreign country, and those who were left in the land of *Judea*, saith the Lord, and I will extricate them from all their troubles and perplexities.

SECT. 74.
Isa. lvii.

19

20. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21. There is no peace saith my God, to the wicked.

As to the wicked and incorrigible, they have no reason to promise themselves the like satisfaction and happiness; as the troubled sea is restless, perpetually ebbing and flowing, and frequently agitated with tempestuous winds, so as to throw upon the strand its mud and filth: such hurry and turbulency, swellings and tossings naturally arise from inordinate desires, distracting cares, and predominant lusts. They are always obnoxious to God's judgments, and have kindled in their own minds and consciences an intestine fire that burns them, therefore saith my God, there is no peace or ease, content or pleasure to the unreclaimable workers of iniquity.

20 & 21

CHAP. LVIII. SECT. LXXV.

The prophet, or servant of God, commanded to awaken sinners to repentance, and impartially represent to them their trespasses. Their hypocrisy: their abuse and perversion of fasting. The nature and qualities, effects and consequences of a truly religious fast.

Isa. lviii. 1.

SECT. 75.

THAT none of my people, who really are, may on account of their external professions, too hastily conclude, that they are not the wicked persons who have no ground for peace; and from thence grow secure in their vices: my instructions to you, my prophet, are to address them in the most striking manner, and with the utmost freedom and impartiality, perspicuity and plainness discover to them the deformity and malignity of their transgressions, convince them how greatly their crimes are aggravated by their privileges; and how dreadful the consequences will be of spurious pretences while they continue hardened in their sins.

2 The greatest difficulty will attend your labours; and hypocrisy, after a thousand attempts to unmask and expose it, still find some shelter or screen: thus

Isa. lviii. 1.

CRY aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

2. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances

nances of their God, they ask of me the ordinances of justice : they take delight in approaching to God.

thus, though they are enormous sinners, they make a great shew of religion by daily resorting to my sanctuary, that by the solemnities of worship they may secure my favour ; and by frequenting their synagogues, hear my word and learn of my servants what is good, and what I have required ; they pretend to delight to know my ways, as if they were resolved to constitute them the rules of their conduct : they enquire what my will is, as if they only wanted to know, in order to do it ; they appear to have great pleasure, in returning opportunities of enjoying communion with God in his ordinances, and various offices of devotion.

SECT 75.

Isa. lviii.

3. Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *Wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exact all your labour.

They proceed still further ; 3 boast of their outward acts of homage ; and in the particular instance of religious fasting, hardly keep any measures of decency with me their God ; if my providence do not immediately correspond with their designs in and expectations from those sacred rites, they are ready to expostulate. To what purpose, *say they*, have we fasted, and yet cannot perceive from any good effects of our pious abstinence, that thou attendest to it? To what end afflicted and distressed

SECT. 75. distressed ourselves, with such
 {
 Isa. lviii.

entire confidence of being accepted, and yet thou hast expressed no regard, by succouring us, to these pleading circumstances of a voluntary humiliation? The answer is as follows; I can never esteem those as fasts, when you prosecute your criminal pleasures, indulge your carnal lusts: when your grinding tempers require of your servants their usual labour; or your griping fists most rigorously exact of your debtors the utmost that is due to you.

4 As if you had no other view in them, your fasting and prayer are no sooner ended, than you return to your ordinary ways of cruelty and inhumanity to your necessitous brethren: such absurdity in your dealings with me your God, and with severity and actual barbarity in your hearts to one another, imploring my mercy, as is now practised, is what I will not suffer to prevail for any favour: it must be in a quite different manner that ye conduct these affairs if you will reasonably expect mine acceptance or answer of mercy.

4. Behold, ye fast
 p for strife and debate,
 and to smite with the fist of wickedness:
 ye shall not fast as
 ye do this day, to
 make your voice to
 be heard on high.

Can

p For strife and debate, &c. Gataker understands this passage as referring to their debts and mortgages.

5. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? *Is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

6. Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye brake every yoke.

Can you entertain such superficial views of these solemn occasions, as to flatter yourselves, the fast which I require and will accept, centers in a temporary mortification of the sensitive appetite; and consists entirely in the pain of hunger, the passion of grief, or the pageantry of external gestures and vociferations: that the most humiliating circumstances, the head hanging down like a bulrush; the coarsest sack-cloth covering, and the whole body rolled in dusts and ashes, are not the meere trifles, when considered as substitutes in the room of a contrite heart, and the most acceptable homage of a reformed life and conversation.

Be assured from impartially asking yourselves, must not the fast, which is eligible in the divine eye of holiness and goodness, prove its sincerity by the forsaking of our sins; and the humanity of our behaviour to one another? by desisting from all extortions and oppressions; and never more distressing and imprisoning the poor, for debts which they are unable to pay; by relieving the galled necks of poor vassals from the heavy burdens they groan under: and by breaking their yokes, suffering them

SECT. 75.

Isa. lviii.

SECT. 75. them to enjoy the sweets of liberty.

Isa. lviii.

7 & 8

Is not a ready and liberal alms-giving a proper testimony ; with the division of shares among the necessitous : hospitably providing friendless strangers with relief in your own habitations, or at your own expence ; and the naked and exposed to the inclemencies of seasons with shelter ; as soon as those pitiable objects are presented to your eyes, supplying them with suitable garments ; and that you never to avoid the expence or trouble shun the sight of a brother *Israelite*, or of a fellow-creature in want and misery, from whatever quarter : act but in this manner, and you shall never have occasion to complain, that when you fast, the Lord does not regard ; when you pray he does not hear : a most prosperous and delightful state shall soon succeed your present calamitous one ; and sprightly health and vigour in the room of weakness and maladies ; you shall experience advantages from the integrity of virtue, which hypocrisy can never afford ; the blessing of heaven shall reward such practice, and temporal honour or eternal glory be the certain issue

7. *Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ;*

8. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily ; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the Lord shall be thy re-reward

issue of justice and equity, charity and mercy. SECT. 75.

Isa. lviii.

9. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am: if thou take away from the midst of thee, the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.

The ear of the Lord will then be opened to hear, and his good affection to answer your first call to him; you need only to cry and you will find him; to say, here I am a speedy and powerful helper; if you utterly reject from having any place among you, all hardships and severities practised upon one another; all calumny and reviling, insult, scoffing and unjust seizures, whether by fraud or violence, all threatening language and gestures, all flattering and deceitful speeches, it will soon be conspicuous to your happiness and satisfaction.

10. And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day.

If with a truly sympathizing heart and unsparing hand of generous beneficence you relieve the poor, supply his necessities, and revive his drooping spirits; the light of your own prosperity shall shine brighter and brighter upon you; and any darkness of adversity or affliction you may meet with, shall be so transient, directed or over-ruled as only to heighten the pleasing scenes that shall early follow it.

⁹ *Rise, &c.* the original signifies to *spring out, or shoot forth*, it is applied to the glory and favour of God. *Isai. lx. i.* and in the text to happiness and prosperity.

SECT. 75.

Isa. lviii.

11

In the whole course of your pilgrimage, the Almighty shall afford you his constant aid, conduct, and blessing: as you have bountifully relieved the poor, in a state of scarcity and extreme drought, your wants shall be abundantly supplied: you shall be healthful and vigorous: and long enjoy an uninterrupted state of plenty and pleasure, that you can communicate to the support and comfort of others; like a well-watered garden, where every thing looks fresh and green: as an ever-flowing fountain that perpetually sends forth its refreshing streams.

12 And if wars or captivities reduce you, yet ye shall recover so that you and your posterity shall rebuild the cities that have long lain in ruin and desolation: where the foundation or groundwork only remain, you shall raise structures that shall stand firm for many ages and generations: you shall be deservedly called the repairers of breaches in walls and fortresses; the restorer of paths and ways that had been untrodden, for travellers again to use and frequent your cities.

13 If you carefully avoid all secular employments, especially all sinful courses on my day of rest;

11. And the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not:

12. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places, thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.

13. if thou turn away thy feet from the sabbath, from doing

ing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own words*.

rest; and far from gratifying your lusts, give an hearty welcome to this respectable and important season for the service of God, and sacred intercourses with heaven: and instead of amusing yourselves with sensual delights, shall make it your great endeavour to please God and promote his glory, by religiously performing all the offices of devotion: not devoting the time to unnecessary journeys, worldly business, impertinent visits, or vain and trifling conversation: you will soon experience the happy effects.

SECT 75.
Isa. lviii.
13.

14. Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and feed thee with the heritage of *Jacob* thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

When you truly enjoy them,¹⁴ and take satisfaction in thus sanctifying my sabbaths, your pleasures and advantages shall be purer and nobler than it is possible you can derive from any other objects: in perfect peace and safety you shall possess the mountainous country of *Judea*, and abound in all the richest blessings which a most beneficent God promised your ancestor *Jacob*, and his posterity: this you may fully rely on, for the mouth of the Lord, who cannot lie or deceive, hath in express words ascertained it.

CHAP. LIX. SECT. LXXVI.

Reasons why deliverances were postponed, not that God did not hear, or could not help, but that his people were unworthy of the benefit, and obstinate in their disobedience. Instances of their extreme degeneracy. Effects thereof, infatuation, gross stupidity, and prevailing misery. Their redemption at length to be compleated, as the result of God's zeal for his own glory; that his name might be confessed; and memorials of his perfection and supremacy transmitted throughout all generations.

Isa. lix. 1.

SECT. 76.
Isa. lix

WHatever your distresses and impatience under them, O ye children of *Israel* may suggest; as if the Almighty was not able, or not willing, to regard your fasts and put an end to your calamities, be assured that he is both these: there is no want of power or goodness in him: he most certainly hears your prayers, and with infinite ease can answer and would succour, if your own unworthiness did not hinder: your iniquities certainly stand as a separation wall betwixt you, that your supplications ascend not to any effect, nor his blessings and mercies come down: it is entirely owing to your sins, that he, as it were, hides his face and will

Isa. lix. 1.

BEHOLD, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

will not hear, but seems altogether regardless what becomes of you. SECT. 76.
Isa. lix.

3. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity, your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

Could you be so absurd as to imagine that you should obtain audience to petitions, your hands were stretched forth, to offer, that reeked with the blood of the innocent, that cried out for vengeance: or your lips were opened to prefer, that for the injuries done, to your neighbour's good name, owed him restitution: for false witness by which he had been deprived of his life or property; and perjury and blasphemy, whereby the greatest mischiefs have been perpetrated.

4. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

The corruption is epidemic; and manifest both in private dealings and public decisions: a partial and criminal connivance is notorious: neither is there a man among you, who has principle and steadiness of resolution enough to admonish the most unrighteous; speak openly and avowedly for truth, or espouse the just cause of his oppressed neighbour: they trust in those false and perfidious things which in the end must deceive them, and be detected: their rancorous breasts labour with schemes of mischief; nei-

SECT. 76. ther are they at rest till they
have executed them.

Isa. lix.

5 Commerce or dealings with them are inexpressibly dangerous: their designs are not more pernicious than they are usually effectual: like the cockatrice or adder's eggs, they are fraught with poison; and when hatched or crushed, produce a viper, whose bite killeth: as the spider's web seldom fails to ensnare smaller insects, so their counsels to destroy the lower kind of people.

6 Their practices, like the curious threads of the spider's art, are extremely guileful and prejudicial to others; yet shall be productive of no great and lasting benefit to themselves: at least they shall afford them no real security or shelter from evils and calamities: when the supreme Judge shall arise to sentence, be arrayed in wrath to punish according to their deeds: what can they expect from works of unrighteousness, constant labours of violence, oppression, and vexation?

7 In performing mischief, they are moreover active and vigorous; speedy and quick in dispatching the most pernicious and horrid business: some one's ruin is the certain aim of their
delibe-

5. They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and *that which is* crushed, breaketh out into a viper.

6. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works; their works *are* works of iniquity, and the act of violence *is* in their hands.

7. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, waiting and destruction *are* in their paths.

8. The way of peace they know not, and *there is* no judgment in their goings. They have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

deliberate thoughts; wherever their course has been directed, is marked and easily distinguished from other ways, by the havoc and misery they have left behind them: they are wholly possessed with such turbulence of spirit and inward workings of violence; that they are utter strangers to every thing of a pacifick and gentle nature: shew no discernment as to moral differences; the rules they have formed to themselves are diametrically opposite to the precepts of God's laws; their evil communications tend to corrupt all good manners; and their familiar acquaintance to throw men out of the way of peace and happiness.

SECT. 76.
Isa. xli
7 & 8

9. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.

The consequence cannot but be baneful, with our other multiplied transgressions, and avowed neglect of all judgment and justice; therefore we cannot wonder that a most righteous God in his providence, frowns upon us; refuses us his protection, and suffers our enemies to triumph: from our humiliation we were hoping for and promising ourselves brighter scenes; but, alas! our distresses remain; our miseries rather increase, and every returning day produces

SECT. 76. something more insupportable
 than the preceding one.

Isa. lix.

10. The danger was obvious, in some of our miscarriages, but we did not foresee so as to prevent it: our eyes were as much closed as if we had none to open: like those who are doomed to perpetual darkness, and forced to direct their steps by feeling for their way with their hands: we have appeared scarce adequate in the plainest cases to steer our course; and as to enterprize or action, have most nearly resembled those whose remains are confined in sepulchral monuments, or pyramids in desolate places.

11. In different accents of a most bitter lamentation, we bewail our wretched state: some in hoarse outcries like the frightful howlings of hunger-bitten bears: others more silently like the bemoaning sighs of the widowed mourning dove: we look up with longing eyes for judgment to be executed upon our enemies, but it is not done: and for deliverance, but it seems at the greatest distance.

12, 13, 14. It is not difficult to assign the
 & 15 reason: our iniquities, O Omniscient Being, if we would palliate them are too great and multiplied: if we would conceal them

10. We grope for the wall like the blind; and we grope as if *we had* no eyes: we stumble at noon-day as in the night: we are in desolate places as dead men.

11. We roar all like bears, and mourn fore like doves: we look for judgment but *there is* none: for salvation *but* it is far off from us.

12. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions *are* with

with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them.

13. In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

14. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

15. Yea, truth faileth, and he that ^rdeparteth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it and it displeased him that *there* ^{was} no judgment.

them, they bear testimony in ^{SECT. 76.} their effects and consequences: ^{Isa. lix.} our professions so different from ^{12, 13,} our practice, declare against ^{14 & 15} us, and in the convictions of our own minds and consciences, we are self-condemned: in the numerous and complicated evils we have brought upon ourselves, we cannot but perceive, and would humbly and penitently confess how great, how presumptuous, how provoking our transgressions are: our apostacy how avowed? what perfidy in our most solemn engagements? our common discourse to what has it tended, but to injure and oppress our neighbour? what declared but our revolt from the Almighty, and that deceptions, untruths, and slanders were become familiar to us? as to our decisions in courts, all regard to right or wrong is departed from them; they are utterly perverted: in all concourses of the people, truth hath none to support it, but it is bore down and trampled on by an impudent and barefaced falsehood: the opposition also is too violent for equity to enter:

^r Departeth, &c. the original signifies to turn aside out of the way of evil; eschew, avoid or shun; maketh himself a prey, the marginal reading is, he is accounted mad.

SECT. 76. ter: there is no veracity, or
 Ma. lix. openness of sincerity to be met
 12, 13, with either in public or private:
 14 & 15 and if any one had resolution
 enough to speak what he thinks,
 and act as he ought to do, he
 would either ruin himself and
 become like a prey to wild beasts,
 or be reputed to be void of rea-
 son. Here our sufferings origi-
 nate; these abominations are na-
 turally productive of the greatest
 miseries; without a speedy and
 effectual repentance no redress
 can reasonably be expected; an
 omniscient Being cannot but have
 observed that there is no justice,
 humanity nor mercy among his
 people, and he cannot but be
 highly displeased.

16 So dreadful and universal a
 dissolution of manners, upon
 cognizance taken thereof by the
 Lord, to speak after the manner
 of men, seemed strange and un-
 accountable; not an individual
 left who was incorrupt enough
 to appear in favour of right, and
 plead for instances of the plainest
 justice, defend injured innocence;
 therefore he himself undertook
 to stem the prevailing torrent of
 iniquity; espouse the cause of
 the

16. And he saw
 that *there was* no man
 and wondered that
there was no interces-
 sor: therefore his
 arm brought salvation
 unto him, and his
 righteousness, it *sus-*
 tained him.

^s *Sustained, &c.* The Hebrew properly rendered signifies, *to*
fix a firm and steady resolution in the mind to engage in and
 go through with some affair. Thus the king of *Babylon* is said
 to *sustain* or set himself against *Jerusalem*.

the oppressed, and preserve those SECT. 76.
lives which would otherwise have
been made a prey; his match-¹⁶
less strength interfered, and his
righteous judgments defended,
or they had been absolutely
ruined.

17. For he put on
righteousness as a
breast-plate, and an
helmet of salvation
upon his head; and
he put on the gar-
ments of vengeance
for cloathing, and
was clad with zeal as
a cloak.

As a military man arms him-¹⁷
self with breast-plate and helmet
for an engagement, the Omni-
potent Being displayed his per-
fect righteousness in a most equi-
table judgment betwixt his peo-
ple and their enemies; his ten-
der concern for his chosen, and
zeal for his own glory shone out
most illustriously; his vengeance
and fiery indignation also ap-
peared in the destruction of their
grievous oppressors.

18. According to
their deeds, accord-
ingly he will repay,
fury to his adver-
saries, recompence to
his enemies, to the
islands he will repay
recompence.

The evil of their actions will¹⁸
be the ground of proportion to
the retributive justice of the e-
ternal Deity, even what they
have precisely deserved at his
vindictive hands: marks of high
displeasure to his open and a-
vowed enemies: a full recom-
pence to those who are ripe for
ruin: neither shall the ungodly
and impenitent in the obscurest
or remotest regions escape in the
day of God's wrath.

19. So shall they
fear the name of the
Lord from the west,
and his glory from
the rising of the sun:
when

This ever memorable punish-¹⁹
ment shall do honour to the
great and adored name of God,
and

SECT. 76. and strike his people's enemies

Isa. lix.

19

with terror: even alarm all nations to whom it shall be reported. When their powerful adversary, like a swelling flood that overflows its banks, shall invade their country, and carry ruin and devastation, conquest and triumph, wherever he goes; shall the almighty power give a sovereign check: with the blast of his mouth shall the Lord suddenly vanquish him, and lift up such a standard, as shall produce the instant death of great numbers, and a precipitate retreat to those who survive.

20 In the most rapid and incessant motion are days and years to hasten the happy time, when a most gracious God will dispatch one to comfort *Zion*, and redeem her sons from bondage: that remnant who are reformed by their captivity from their transgressions to his worship and service, shall be restored, faith the Lord, to the most perfect liberty.

As

when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

20. And the redeemer shall come to *Zion*, and unto them that turn from transgression in *Jacob*, faith the Lord.

* Redeemer, &c. if the original reading was, *that a deliverer shall come to these who turn from iniquity*: the Apostle probably quoted, *Rom. xi. 26.* from the lxx. version. However, a very useful practical observation naturally arises, viz. that after chastisement and rejection, no reasonable hope can be grounded of acceptance and deliverance, but in the way of repentance and reformation. *Lev. xxvi. 39-41. Deut. xxx. 1-10.*

21. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy feeds feed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

As for my people, saith a most true and faithful God, this is the covenant, promise, or grant of favour, on my part, which they may be certain I shall perform; as has been foretold, they shall be freed from servitude: and as to the spirit of prophecy, with which, O my servant *Isaiab*, I have endued thee: it shall remain to thy life's end, for thy continual direction: my messengers also, in their successive ages and generations, shall enjoy the same assistance and guidance, till the whole series of predictions shall be accomplished, saith a God of supreme perfection and universal dominion.

SECT. 76.
Isa. lix.
21

CHAP. LX. SECT. LXXVII.

Jews invited to welcome and improve pleasing changes, and the advantages of liberty and prosperity. Respect shewed them by foreign nations; honour by princes, and submission by enemies, in their return from Babylon. Their wealth and power, peace and tranquillity, with an increase of numbers.

Isa. lx. i.

SECT. 77.

Isa. lx.

¶

RAISE, as from the dust,
O ye humbled and afflicted
Israelites, your drooping
heads: shine forth with an un-
usual beauty and lustre, for the
day of your redemption and pros-
perity begins to dawn, and the
Lord your God and deliverer,
to display his glory, his supreme
beauty, and boundless goodness
and mercy.

2 In a comparative view with
other nations you shall esteem
yourselves extremely happy;
and whilst they are deluded with
the darkness of ignorance and
slavery, superstition and idola-
try, your light of the clearest
knowledge and inestimable sweets
of liberty, shall bare date from
your deliverance, and gloriously
shine forth in the inestimable fa-
vour of your restoration.

Isa. lx. i.

A-RISE, shine,
for thy light is
come, and the glory
of the Lord is risen
upon thee.

2. For behold, the
darkness shall cover
the earth, and gross
darkness the people;
but the Lord shall
rise upon thee, and
his glory shall be
seen upon thee.

from

3. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

From this signal circumstance SECT 77
to the advantage of your affairs, Isa. lx.
heathens who formerly had you ³
in great contempt, shall solicit your friendship, to be instructed in that religion which is so much to your honour established among you: and powerful monarchs court an alliance with you; for the exalted dignity to which the great object of your homage and service hath advanced you by the wonders of his providence and the excellence of his laws.

4. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see, all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

Cast your admiring eyes on ⁴
every side, to behold the multitudes that assemble from surrounding nations: they come in crouds to be united, their posterity also accompany them to be fastened in your arms and bosom, and educated as the common offspring of one and the same wife and most indulgent parent.

5. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

A most entertaining sight it ⁵
shall be, and you shall mingle in the general conflux, not wholly without some fear, what shall be the issue of such surprizing scenes: but the heart soon shall be freed from it, and enlarged with social friendly dispositions to receive and embrace them all: even multitudes from the maritime provinces that are profelyted to your faith; and armies of
heathens

SECT. 77. heathens that arrive, accompanied with their families and treasures.

Isa. lx.

6 The whole land shall be covered with concourses of *Midianites*, who inhabit *Arabia*; and *Sheba* almost vacated of people, who come riding upon camels and dromedaries, loaded with the richest produce of their respective countries. That you may be re-established as to opulence and independance; they shall present you with the greatest plenty of gold and incense; that the solemnities of your worship may want nothing of a secular influence and importance.

7 Those foreign nations also, the principal parts of whose wealth consists in flocks and herds, shall assemble to unite themselves, in religious acknowledgments of the living and true God, with his people, and shall bountifully contribute supplies of sacrifices for the use of the sanctuary: my holy temple built with amazing magnificence for my glory, that has long lain in ruins, shall be restored to a considerable degree of its former splendour, and have solemnities of worship again performed in it, and graciously accepted.

6. The multitude of camels shall cover thee: the dromedaries of *Midian* and *Ephah*; all they from *Shebah* shall come: they shall bring gold and incense: and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.

7. All the flocks of *Kedar*, shall be gathered together unto thee: the rams of *Nebatich* shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

'Tis

8. Who *are* these
that fly as a cloud,
and as the doves to
their windows.

'Tis astonishing to observe, ^{S/CT. 77.}
with what expedition and ardour ^{Isa. lx.}
of an affectionate zeal multitudes
proceed : and natural to enquire,
Who or what are these ? Is it
possible they all can be our
friends, and in motion to join
our assembly, who thus hasten
their course with the rapidity of
a flying cloud : cut the yielding
air with the winged speed of a
flock of pigeons to their well-
stored dove-houses.

9. Surely the isles
shall wait for me,
and the ships of *Tar-*
shish first to bring thy
sons from far, their
silver and their gold
with them, unto the
name of the Lord thy
God : and to the ho-
ly one of *Israel*, be-
cause he hath glori-
fied thee.

Still more extraordinary, the
inhabitants of distant islands, by
some means shall be acquainted
with the signs of the times, so
as only to wait for proper con-
veyances in order to travel to
these parts : and the men of
Tarshish, so famous for their skill
in navigation, shall readily af-
ford the assistance of their ship-
ping to convey thy sons from re-
mote parts ; with all others who
are disposed to the same homage
and service, to worship the great
JEHOVAH at *Jerusalem*, and de-
vote their multitude of riches
to the sacred treasury : this they
shall do very willingly, when
they are admiring spectators,
how the divine attributes are dis-
played in the chastisement of his
people, and upon their repent-
ance, in their restoration to emi-
nence

SECT. 77. nence and a most glorious importance.

Isa. lx.

¹⁰ Upon king *Cyrus's* proclamation for repairing the shattered walls of the ancient city, strangers shall voluntarily concur to promote the laudable design, and crowned heads royally contribute: in my just displeasure, saith the holy and blessed God, I corrected you for your manifold transgressions: your reformation has reinstated you in my favour, and obtained for you remission, clemency, and mercy.

¹¹ From this strong invitation to a sinful and perishing world, there will, doubtless, be a confluence of *Gentiles* to *Jerusalem*; and let its gates stand continually wide open to receive them: let them never be shut, but the freest admission given that fresh crouds may incessantly enter, introducing their immense riches, and crowned heads enter with their glittering trains.

¹² The freest access and universal admittance of foreigners will not at all be prejudicial to your own state and nation: for you shall be raised to such an elevation of power and greatness, and shall so clearly understand the nature, uses, and ends of these things, as to compel those who are

¹⁰. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee, for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

¹¹. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the *Gentiles*, and that their kings may be brought.

¹². For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish: yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

are reluctant, to be subservient ^{SECT. 77.} to your purposes; or submit to ^{Isa. lx.} an untimely fate, and their country to all the miseries of an utter devastation.

13. the glory of *Lebanon* shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

The important concern of social homage, and the solemnities of worship shall not be overlooked: the cedars and other lofty trees, that give the forest of *Lebanon* so conspicuous and glorious an aspect, shall be conveyed by the *Syrians* to *Jerusalem*, for rebuilding and decorating my temple; so that the place of my rest shall again be the admiration of all nations for beauty, grandeur, and magnificence.

14. The sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of the Lord, the *Zion* of the holy one of *Israel*.

By the signal advantage in the change of your circumstances, a surprizing one shall also be produced in men's behaviour, and the greater respect that shall be shewed you: your enemies, and the instruments of your adversity and misery, or great augmentors of them by their neglects and insults, shall, in humble addresses, supplicate your regard and friendship; from his most seasonable and wonderful interposition in your favour, they shall readily acknowledge and desire to participate in your distinguishing advantages from an especial interest in the all-ruling

SECT. 77. providence of an almighty and
most beneficent Deity.

Isa. lx.

¹⁵ A quite different aspect shall be given to all your affairs: your gates lately in ruins, your city unfrequented, and your country a most horrid waste, shall recover their former respectable appearance and importance: full assemblies, large concourses of people shall declare your weight and influence, and be productive to you of considerable degrees of satisfaction and happiness.

¹⁶ Heathens shall also express an unfeigned affection by a division with you of their substance and fortunes: powerful monarchs shall do you honour, grant you protection, and liberally supply your occasions out of their treasures: they are, in these respects, saith the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, under my absolute direction; and you shall have all desirable evidence, that I am your sovereign Ruler, Guardian, and Defender.

The richest metals you shall possess in such abundance, as to make use of them in common, for ordinary occasions in the
¹⁷ room of those of smaller value: as to all secular advantages, to the utmost that your hearts can wish, you shall be opulent and
illus-

¹⁵ Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee; I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

¹⁶ Thou shalt also suck the milk of the *Gentiles*, and shalt suck the breast of kings, and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy favourer and thy redeemer, the mighty one of *Jacob*.

¹⁷ For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

SECT. 77.

Ifa. lx.

17

Transcendently greater shall
be the lights thrown by divine
providence on your affairs, than
the direction of the sun and
moon ; those luminaries, in their
brightest lustre, shall be meer
darkness in comparison with
their perspicuity and splendour ;

nothing

SECT. 77. nothing too great or good, but it

may reasonably be expected, for
Isa. lx.

19 the origin of all perfection, and
father of lights, shall himself,
by the peculiar displays of his
omnipotence, wisdom, and be-
nevolence, vouchsafe you an
unerring and perpetual guid-
ance; and the fountain of all
blessedness distinguish you by
his favour, with signal marks of
dignity and glory.

20 The celestial orbs shine only
by intervals in the hemisphere;
and their beams are sometimes
intercepted, sometimes with-
drawn: the counsel, whereby
the illustrious *Jehovah* will con-
duct all your ways, will be un-
shaded and invariable; and the
anxious care and pining grief of
adversity be at an entire end.

21 High degrees of happiness are
farther promised you, by the
most important change of an
universal reformation prevailing
in the morals of all ranks: you
need not question but you shall,
for many ages and generations,
enjoy the pleasant land of fertile
Canaan: I the Lord of the whole
world, have prepared it for your
accommodation: it is the work
of my hand, saith the infinite
Majesty, and under my especial
care, that it may do me honour,
therefore shall not fail to prosper.

The

20. Thy sun shall
no more go down,
neither shall thy
moon withdraw it-
self: for the Lord
shall be thine ever-
lasting light, and the
days of thy mourn-
ing shall be ended.

21. Thy people
also shall be all right-
eous: they shall in-
herit the land for
ever, the branch of
my planting, the
work of my hands,
that I may be glori-
fied.

22. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

The number of your people at first may be small and inconsiderable, only a sort of remnant; yet in a short time it shall be surprizingly increased; as it were a petty family or single pair shall produce a great and mighty nation: at the period determined, the event will take place: for I the great and universal Lord and Governour do charge myself with the necessary care, in the speediest manner, to dispatch all proper circumstances that naturally conduce in due season to effect it.

SECT. 77.
Isa. lx.

CHAP. LXI. SECT. LXXVIII.

The prophet's extraordinary mission asserted. Its design to ascertain the deliverance of the Jews from captivity; also the favours with which it should be accompanied. Integrity acceptable; hypocrisy hateful to a most just GOD. Israelites to be admired by heathens, and the goodness of the almighty Preserver celebrated. Illustrated by a beautiful simile, taken from the fruits of the earth.

SECT. 78.
Isa. lxi.

Isa. lxi. 1.

THAT you, my countrymen, may absolutely rely on what I am discovering, be you satisfied that I am under the influence of the power and spirit of God: separated to be a prophet, and accomplished, as to all suitable gifts and graces, for that difficult and important office; that I may publish intelligence which greatly concerns, and will give inexpressible pleasure to the meek and humble, mortified and abated under a deep sense of their sins and miseries: that by affording them support and consolation, I may, as it were, bind up and cure the wounds of the broken-hearted captives: that I may testify to them, in their deplorable state of tedious and severe servitude, the recovery

Isa. lxi. 1.

THE spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath appointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

very of their freedom : their release from prison-houses, and the striking off their fetters, who have been long secluded from the pleasure and benefit of the light, and confined in dark and gloomy cells.

2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord † and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn.

To proclaim aloud that they all may hear and be enabled to bear up their spirits, that the joyful time shall shortly commence, when the Lord will again admit into favour his afflicted

^s *Acceptable, &c.* The *Jubilee* is here probably referred to, or that year which was peculiarly dedicated to manumission of servants, and restitution of lands to their ancient possessors. To give proper notice of these privileges, the *Sanedrim* were obliged upon the tenth day of the seventh month, *the great day of expiation*, to proclaim liberty by the sound of trumpets, and this was to be done in all the public highways, that these immunities might be known through the whole nation. *Cuneus* has noted, that the *agrarian law* made by *Moses* concerning the restitution of possessions, was observed with great solemnity till the desolation of the former sanctuary by the *Assyrians*. After that *Palestine* lay forsaken and untilled for the space of seventy years as the prophets had foretold. But when at length that fatal time had expired, the *Jews* indeed returned to their ancient habitations, and the temple was built anew ; but never was the *Agrarian law* revived, nor the *Jubilee* solemnities celebrated any more. No more did now every 50th or 49th year give liberty to servants, nor restore to the former lords their lost and sold possessions. *Cune. l. i. c. 6. Lew Antiq. v. ii. p. 613, 615.*

† *And the day of vengeance.* This is not found in our Lord's quotation of the passage, on which omission several remarks may occur, but none at all that are derogatory from the honour and illustrious character of the world's saviour : which will stand upon the same solid and impregnable foundation, though some of the prophetic writings should be quoted only by way of accommodation, or as properly expressive of some events or circumstances that happened in his day, as well as those of former ages and generations.

SECT. 78. afflicted people; and the awful

Isa. lxi.

² period, when he will take an ample vengeance on their enemies, whose hands have been so heavy upon them: and give them abundant cause of comfort, who have been long mourning for their offences, under great calamities and distresses.

3 In some degree to mitigate their pain and grief, who are performing in desolate Zion a most solemn humiliation: to array them in neat and clean apparel, who are sorrowing in sackcloth, sprinkled with dust and ashes: in the room of that gloomy sadness and melancholy dejection which disfigure the countenance, the oil of joy that maketh the face to shine: and instead of hearts oppressed, and almost overwhelmed with anxieties and miseries: the richest or most splendid attire, usually wore on occasions of triumph or festivity, that they may meet again in concert to celebrate God's praises: like certain trees, that for a season seemed decayed and dead, yet revived, blossomed, and brought forth fruit: that they may be reputed good and righteous men, whose virtuous dispositions and noblest qualities, the Lord hath cultivated, and is pleased to esteem

3. To appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

teem himself honoured by their maturity and perfection. SECT. 78.

Isa. lxi.

4. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

They shall raise structures, and beautify them, and furnish them with inhabitants, in those antiquated and solitary tracts of their country, where ruin and desolation have long reigned: bid the walls of dismantled cities rise again, the spires ascend, and those superb edifices, which for ages and generations have lain a kind of wreck, recover all their strength, grace, and lustre.

5. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen, and your vine-dressers.

As to your domestic labours, there shall be a sufficiency of vassals, that you purchase with your money, or make prisoners in your wars, for those servile purposes, you will not have occasion in your prosperous condition, to employ your own wealthy people: crouds of heathens shall most chearfully engage to serve you: undertake the care of your flocks, the plowing of your land, and the dressing and pruning of your vineyards.

6. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, *men* shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the *Gentiles*, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves.

You have been used enough; contemptuously and cruelly in your state of captivity; upon your return you shall be highly esteemed: like the priests and ministers of religion, who if eminent for learning, and exemplary

SECT. 78. plary in their lives and conversations, are universally admired;

Isa. lxi.

6 by virtue of their sacred function exempt from servile offices, and for whose decent support your law hath sufficiently provided, without their fatiguing labour; thus, upon the wealth you receive by the accession of the *Gentiles*, you shall be enabled to live at ease and in splendour: whatever they are possessed of, that is useful and beneficial, respectable, ornamental, and honourable, shall be entirely at your disposal.

7 The ignominy and abject misery you have sustained, shall be recompenced with manifold privileges and public marks of high respect; and instead of that disorder and confusion the children of *Israel* have often felt from the reproach and disgrace attending reduced circumstances; they shall be truly contented with the state and portion of good things allotted them: and when they shall return to their native country, by the bounty of heaven the produce shall be blessed with so large an increase, as if they enjoyed a double proportion of the most fertile land: superadded to crown all, they shall receive these advantages with

7. For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

with an entire satisfaction, a religious gratitude, and a cheerful obedience. SECT 78.
Isa. lxi.

8. For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering, and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

This improvement, saith the⁸ all-perfect Being, is most acceptable to me; shews that just discernment which I approve; neither can I refuse them my peculiar favour, who through all the vicissitudes of time, and even rigours of adverse fortune, have supported the character of an inviolable integrity; for, I the Lord, have equal and fair dealing in the highest estimation: I should utterly detest the effects of injustice and extortion, though they were devoted to my service, and expended in offerings on mine altar: my instructions shall all appear calculated, to form my people's minds and manners, according to the laws of undissembled probity; and I will renew and confirm to them in the most sacred and inviolable manner, my grants and privileges.

9. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.

The benefit shall not be li-⁹ mitted to one generation, but posterity shall be treated as important, with respect and esteem by heathen nations; and foreigners who become acquainted with their worth and character, shall freely acknowledge that it is entirely owing to God's great good-

SECT. 78. goodness, that they enjoy an extraordinary prosperity, even the utmost plenty and perfection of every earthly blessing.

Isa. lxi.

10 We should be unpardonable, if upon such an occasion it was not the affectionate language of every grateful *Israelite*: I will exult and triumph in my most gracious God's inexpressible goodness; my heart shall overflow with thankfulness, joy and glory for his inestimable favours: I am eminently distinguished by this great deliverance, as if I was adorned with the richest garments; as a bridegroom sets off his person with all proper ornaments, and as a bride glitters in the brilliancy of costly jewels, for the matrimonial solemnity; so hath the Almighty expressed his concern for us to our honour and advantage.

11 We have experienced, that during a certain season a beloved people, for their errors and miscarriages, may lie under the seeming frowns of divine providence;

10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

11. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth: so

^u *Decketh.* The *Hebrew* is here omitted by the *Syriac*, the *Chaldee* seems to read *vechahau*; the *Vulg. decoratum: Vitrina* makes the primary sense of the radix to be *arete rem rei adjungere*, and says, that thence cometh the signification of *priest*, which it is said always to denote but in this place. *F. Houbigant* renders, *addidit splendorem*, from a *Syriac* derivative which signifies *splendour*. *Jewels* expressive of the brilliancy and glittering of embroidered garments.

so the Lord God will
cause righteousness
and praise to spring
forth before all na-
tions.

dence; and our heavenly Father, SECT 78.
as it were, hide his face: yet Isa. lxi.
whenever he returns and again 12.
makes the light of his counte-
nance to shine upon them; they
shall see abundant reason for ce-
lebrating, in the highest strains,
the praises of his faithfulness and
beneficence: a view to their be-
nefit and moral improvement,
conformable to standard rules of
reason, shall as certainly appear
from his dispensations, as the
increase of the earth and fruit of
the trees are manifest, from the
laws of divine providence, in the
circulating seasons.

C H A P.

CHAP. LXII. SECT. LXXIX.

The prophet's affectionate concern for Zion. His consequent republication of certain glad tidings. Watchmen appointed, and directed to be constant in their duty. The Jews no more to be distressed by their enemies. Their deliverance from captivity proclaimed; and their future character to be that of a reformed, holy, and exemplary people.

Isa. lxii. 1.

SECT. 79.

Isa. lxii.

SO long as I make pretensions, saith the prophet, to a sacred character and genuine public spirit; my zeal can never abate for the good and happiness, the peace and tranquillity, the civil and religious liberty of my native country; neither can I cease to persuade them as productive of all these, to the practise of virtue and piety; and to assure them on this condition, of their speedy deliverance from a state of bondage: till the joyful period commence that God's promises shall be accomplished, the justice of his people's cause be fully vindicated, their wrongs redressed, and their redemption most illustriously completed.

2 Surrounding heathens shall observe and admire, O most righteous God, the wonderful displays of thy wisdom, equity and

Isa. lxii. 1.

FOR Zion's sake I will withhold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

2. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called

led by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

and benevolence, and the attention of some of the greatest monarchs be engaged to be witnesses : to what an envied height of exalted dignity, O ye distressed captives, your *Jehovah* hath advanced you; the shrill trumpet of your uncommon fame shall sound loud, and a new name of honourable distinction be given you by the mouth of the Lord, in his extraordinary favours.

SECT. 79.
Isa. lxii.

3. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

A still further degree of amazing condescension shall the Infinite Being shew, that in his treatment of his people, it shall seem as if he regarded them as equally an honour to him, as princes do their crowns and diadems; and take them in their hands and put them on their heads, as a kind of tokens of sovereignty and dominion.

4. Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate: but thou shalt be called *Hephzibah*, and thy land *Beulah*: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

You shall not hereafter, from the long delay of your deliverance, be reckoned abandoned the care of divine providence; nor your country be destitute of inhabitants, like a widow bereaved of children, from the inroads of foreign enemies: but the felicitating title *Hephzibah*, that is, *my delight is in her*, shall be truly ascribed to you: and your land be justly stiled *Beulah*, for the state of your affairs shall resemble that of a married woman with a numerous

SECT. 79. merous and most engaging family of pleasant and dutiful children: your country shall be a most fertile and populous one.

Ha. lxii.

5 The strongest images of conjugal affection and endearment, in instances where the young couple are most happily united, but imperfectly represent, the welfare and prosperity you shall enjoy: the regard shewn your country shall truly resemble but greatly exceed the love of a young bridegroom to a most beautiful and amiable virgin, whom he has newly married; and the Lord shall take in you a similar satisfaction, as a most uxorious husband does in his dearest spouse.

6 As a further testimony of my extreme concern for your well-being saith the Lord, I have appointed prophets and teachers, who, as watchmen stationed on the walls of a city, are to alarm it of danger, shall instruct you constantly in duty, and most fervently implore for you the divine protection and blessing.

7 And, O you to whom this important province is assigned, fail not to intercede with the utmost ardour and importunity, till a most gracious God, in his infinite goodness, shall be pleased to establish the inhabitants of *Jerusalem* upon the most solid and

5. For as a young man marieth a virgin so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

6. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O *Jerusalem*, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence.

7. And give him no rest, till he shall establish, and till he make *Jerusalem* a praise in the earth.

and lasting foundation : that his name appear illustriously glorious in their advantages and happiness ; and their piety and virtue be universally celebrated.

SECT 79.

Isa. lxii.

8. The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies, and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured :

9. But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord ; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

10. Go through the gates ; prepare you the way of the people, cast up, cast up the highway, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people.

You may fully depend upon a most gracious answer : no difficulty or seeming impossibility in things themselves can hinder this : the great and omnipotent God hath promised, by a most solemn oath he stands engaged, therefore the performance is certain and indubitable : expressly declaring, Let me never more be regarded as the Almighty and Supreme Being, if your enemies are ever hereafter suffered to eat or to spoil your provisions of bread and wine ; you yourselves, with the reapers employed to gather it, shall enjoy the harvest ; and my servants at their festivals in the courts of my sanctuary, shall regale upon the wine : blessing and praising God in their public assemblies for the favours and mercies he so bountifully bestows.

Antecedent to this wished for season, indeed you must undergo a long and tedious servitude at *Babylon* : but I do positively assure you of redemption, as if I now heard it proclaimed with the herald's loudest voice ; saying, Do you hasten through the gates

SECT. 79.
Isa. lxii.

gates of the city where you have been slaves, and dispatch quick
10 your return to your native country; let the roads also be repaired, the ground levelled, and the craggy rough places made smooth and plain: with standards erected at certain distances, for the people to rendezvous, and give notice to their brethren of their redemption.

11 In the nature of the grant by *Cyrus*, and all the wonderful circumstances of the extraordinary event, it will be observable, that it is by the high command of the Lord Jehovah of *Israel*, that his people are delivered: as if he had expressly said, declare to the *Jews*, that it is by the Almighty power of their God, that the *Babylonians* are destroyed: he will now recompence upon their own heads, all the wickedness and inhumanity with which they have treated you: the work he intends lies plain and clear before him; he perfectly understands every particular of it, neither is it possible that he should meet with the the least difficulty or obstruction.

12 With admiring eyes shall the neighbouring nations proclaim, these are undoubtedly a select people

11. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of *Zion*, Behold thy salvation cometh, behold his reward is with him, and his work before him.

12. And they shall call them, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, and thou

thou shalt be called,
fought out, a city
not forsaken.

people, providence interposes in ^{SECT. 79.}
their behalf; and hereafter you ^{Isa. lxii.}
shall be denominat¹²ed; *the en-*
quired for, as of high repute, not
forsaken and abandoned as of no
manner of consequence or im-
portance.

CHAP. LXIII. SECT. LXXX.

*The deliverer of the Jews, represented as a prince or
general returning from the defeat and slaughter of his
enemies. Interposition of providence conspicuous in
this slaughter. Grateful acknowledgments due from
the people delivered. Heavy complaints that they
had been abandoned to commit the most aggravated
follies and vices.*

Isa. lxiii. 1.

WHO is this that
cometh from
Edom, * with dyed
garments from Boz-
rah? this that is glo-
rious in his apparel,
travelling in the
greatness of his
strength? I that speak
in righteousness,
mighty to save.

Isa. lxiii. 1.

THE prophet having in a ^{SECT. 80.}
vision, beheld the great ^{Isa. lxiii.}
and awful event, with astonish-
ment enquires, Who is this per-
sonage that is to be the deliverer of
God's people, who marches in
such order and regularity, with
such dignity and majesty, as a
triumphant conqueror in his

T 3

pro-

* *With dyed garments, &c.* The learned Dr. Taylor renders
with garments soured, or made to smell sour with wine sprinkled up-
on them in treading the vintage, as Bozrah signifies. The word is
applied to leavened bread, as being the most grateful and fa-
vory to the palate: and to provender that cattle are fond of.
It has been observed that the prophet does not speak this of
Christ's ascending triumphantly into heaven after his bloody
passion.

SECT. 80. procession, from the entire overthrow of his enemies at *Edom* ?

Isa. lxiii.

¹ Who in raiment besmeared with blood, from the sacking and slaughter of the capital city *Bozrah* ? Who, in garments which bespeak his arduous enterprize, and are illustriously glorious with the strongest marks of a compleat victory, but most dreadful carnage ? Who, that most certainly has carried along with him, wherever he has been, defeat, horror and confusion. The Lord answers, It is I the just one and the true, who never promise what I do not perform ; and whatever difficulties there are in the way, have sufficient power to save my people ;

passion, because it is expressly said at the 3d verse that his garments were red, not with his own blood, but with the blood of his enemies. *Edom* signifies red, and *Bozrah* a vintage, therefore it is most probable, that the destruction of the *Edomites*, always bitter enemies to the *Jews*, is intended : rather, perhaps, their adversaries at large, especially the *Babylonians*. The original hath relation to the actions or manners, and superb mein of a triumphant prince returning from a battle, in which he had gained a compleat victory over his enemies. And compared with *Isai.* iv. 14. *Jer.* xlviii. 42. it may imply the pomp and high spirit with which he driveth before him the prisoners he hath taken. May not *Jer.* xlviii. 12. then be rendered, *I will send him triumphing conquerors who shall drive him away into captivity, Isai.* li. 14. *He that is driven by a triumphing conqueror into captivity shall be loosed.* And the text, *This that is glorious in his apparel, triumphing and driving his prisoners before him in the greatness of his strength.* Agreeable to which, *Jer.* ii. 20. *Thou saidst, I will not transgress, whereas upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou triumphest, accest with an impetuous haughty spirit, playing the harlot.*

2. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?

3. I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

4. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart: and the year of my redeemed is come.

ple; who rely upon my faithfulness and goodness.

Permit me, saith the prophet, farther humbly to request to be informed of the cause that your apparel is of so exceeding red a colour; and your garments, like one who had just been treading out the juice in the wine-press, strong tinged with the blood of the grape? To which it was replied, the comparison is not improper, for I alone, by virtue of my own strength, have overcome the enemies of my people; neither was there a man among them who had power and courage to withstand my invincible arm: as grapes are trodden in pieces, so have I in my violent anger, made among them the greatest havock and destruction; my garments are truly sprinkled with their blood, deeply tinged with that crimson torrent.

The time appointed is now commenced, for taking an ample vengeance on the adversaries of my injured people, for all the treacheries and violences committed against them: it is my stedfast purpose to embrace it; and at this precise period, perform for them, the great work of a perfect deliverance.

SECT. 80.

Isa. lxiii.

In this arduous enterprize and general concern, I might have expected assistance from the neighbouring oppressed nations; but I found none inclined to concur: it looked very strange, methought, that notwithstanding their sufferings from an overgrown tyranny, none of them had resolution enough to engage with me to humble it: the important affair devolved wholly on myself; I exerted my own Almighty power to support the cause of my people; and my burning indignation, supplied me with sufficient vigour, and a determinate resolution to punish the inhumanity that had been practised upon them.

6 I shewed a becoming rigour and severity, and in my extreme displeasure, inflicted evils and miseries, as grapes are trodden in the wine-fat: I also suffered them to be infatuated and stupid as to designing or performing any thing of moment: as drunkards reeling to and fro, and unable to stand, so the strongest and mightiest of them staggered, lost footing, and fell to the ground.

5. And I looked, and *there was* none to help: and I wondered that *there was* none to y uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me.

6. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

Such

y Uphold. The original, as has in another place been noted, signifies to keep firm and steady; to fix an unshaken purpose, and determinate resolution in the mind, to engage in, and go through with an affair.

7. I will mention the loving-kindness as of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of *Israel*, which he hath bestowed on them, according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.

8. For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their favour.

Such instances of divine interposition, for the preservation of his people, demand our acknowledgments of the sincerest gratitude; therefore the language of one and all should be, whenever I shall humbly address the Infinite Majesty, I will make a most thankful mention of his goodness and benignity, which have been so illustriously displayed, and are so richly deserving of our united praises; his bounteous providence, his distinguished and multiplied favours and mercies.

In his original grant of extraordinary privileges to the children of *Israel*, when he took them to be his peculiar people, he was condescendingly pleased to express himself in the endearing manner that follows; I may surely rest satisfied that my beloved people will be true to their engagement, and habitually practise as they have professed: an earthly parent expects submission and obedience from a well educated offspring: upon the strongest grounds of reason may the Almighty promise himself that the seed of *Abraham* will not act insincerely, therefore he undertook to be their guardian and preserver.

No

SECT. 80.

Isa. lxiii.

SECT. 80.

Isa. lxiii.

No danger or distress, no calamity or misery befel them, that he was not, in the course of his providence, as ready to afford them succour, as if he himself had most sensibly felt the pain they endured: and a messenger was early dispatched from his presence to relieve them: whenever they were oppressed or enslaved he raised them up saviours: from the earliest accounts of time that he had chosen them, and the infancy of their state; the most affectionate mother never shewed greater solicitude for the safety and welfare of her offspring, than a kind providence was concerned, by all instances of a most vigilant care to support and preserve them.

10 They acted not answerably to the benefits received, but utterly neglected the instruction and admonition given them in God's word by a succession of prophets: he was therefore very justly offended, and from time to time suffered their enemies, in order to their correction and reformation, to rise up and wage war against them.

11 Yet in smiting and punishing the Almighty was pleased to take retrospective views of what he had formerly done in mercy, by the ministry of his servant

Moses,

9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

11. Then he remembered the days of old, *Moses* and his people, saying, where is he that brought them up out of the sea,

sea, with the shepherd of his flock? Where *is* he that put his holy spirit within him?

Moses, when he admitted them to be his peculiar people: expressly saying, Where is he? or why does he not again deliver, who miraculously conducted his flock through the *Red Sea* by *Moses* as a shepherd? wherefore has he withdrawn his gracious influences who so richly endued that great lawgiver with the gifts and graces of his spirit, that he might be accomplished for instructing and governing his people.

SECT 80.

Isa. lxiii.

11

12. That led them by the right hand of *Moses*, with his glorious arm, dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

Who, as his instrument with his mighty power, employed the same *Moses*, by means of the rod in his right-hand, to divide the waters for the *Israelites* safe and easy passage; that he might be universally admired for the wonderful displays of his glorious perfections.

13. That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?

Who brought them through the depths of rivers, free from danger as on dry ground? not in a hurry with a panic fear, but by a gentle motion and sober pace, that they might not stumble nor fall, as a horse is led with care by a bridle in the wilderness?

14. As a beast goeth down into the valley, the spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people to make thyself a glorious name.

As a beast goeth leisurely down a steep hill to pasture in the valleys; so were the select tribes managed and guided in their travels by a kind providence

SECT. 30. dence, being relieved with stops

and pauses as there was occasion

Isa. lxiii. by the way, till they arrived at

¹⁴ their settled rest in the land of

Canaan; that honour and power

might be ascribed to the ever-

blessed God, who presided over

and superintended every thing

that concerned them.

¹⁵ From a retrospect view of the

great mercy shewed, and won-

derful deliverances wrought for

our fathers, permit us their pos-

terity in a state of extreme dis-

tress, most humbly to beseech

thee, good and blessed God, to

cast down a pitying eye; only

deign to behold from thy exalted

state and most glorious throne;

and we cannot but hope that

thou wilt speedily and effectually

relieve, if thou canst, see us much

longer injured, suffer us in all

humility to enquire where is thy

ardour of affection and strong

passion of sympathy? canst thou

in opposition to all thy most na-

tural feelings and tender com-

passions, restrain or delay those

interpositions which used to be

so ready and operative for our

support and consolation.

¹⁶ *Abraham* and *Israel* were once

our progenitors, but have long

since departed this mortal life,

and

¹⁵ Look down

from heaven, and

behold from the ha-

bitation of thy holi-

ness, and of thy glo-

ry: Where *is* thy

zeal and thy strength,

the sounding of thy

bowels, and of thy

mercies towards me?

are they restrained?

¹⁶ Doubtless thou

art our father, & tho'

Abraham be ignorant

of us, and *Israel* ac-

know-

* *Though Abraham, &c.* Is not this an indirect glance at the
absurd custom of deifying deceased heroes; and offering up
addresses

knowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting.

and are utter strangers to our circumstances; but undoubtedly thou art still our Father, everlasting God, perfectly acquainted with our affairs, and hast always maintained the character of a Redeemer, neither is it possible that any of thy titles or attributes should ever fail.

SECT. 80.
Isa. lxiii.
16

17. O^a Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways? and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servant's sake, the tribe of thine inheritance.

The fault of our extreme obstinacy and most fatal blindness is our own, but be not displeased, gracious God, that we most humbly intreat the Lord not to be angry that we expostulate; why, if there was a possibility of our reformation, hast thou, for the punishment of our sins, withdrawn thy good spirit, and all the probable means; suffered, as it were, a veil to be thrown before our eyes, that we may not see clearly our duty, but our errors and delusions grow upon us: return in mercy, let our hearts be softened, and what has been wrong rectified: we are thy servants and inheritance, whom

addresses to their ancestors of eminence who had long ago departed this life. They might admire their excellence of virtue, and ought to have followed their examples; but to go further, as seems implied, argued great degeneracy from the exalted merit of their worthy progenitors.

^a O Lord, &c. Mr. Lowth hath very properly observed on this manner of expression, that the *Hebrews* in the form called *Hyphil*, denote only *permission*, by terms that seem to signify direct action; as he illustrates by a great variety of passages. Vide *Lowth in Loc.*

SECT. 80. whom thou wilt not surely reject
 and abandon, if thou canst con-
 fidently spare and save us.

Isa. lxiii.

18 In comparison with the extent of our hopes and thy gracious promises, 'tis but for a short time that thy holy people have possessed the land of *Canaan*: it must enhance thy displeasure against them, that our adversaries are thine avowed enemies, worship idols in thy stead, and have laid waste that land where thy sanctuary is placed, and the solemnities of thy worship statedly performed.

19 Give us leave further to plead for our speedy deliverance, our intimate connection or near relation, as thy determined property: they never acknowledged thy supremacy, submitted to thy government, nor were stiled, as we are, thy children, people, and inheritance.

18. The people of thy holiness have possessed *it*, but a little while, our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

19. We are *thine*, thou never barest rule over them, they were not called by thy name.

CHAP. LXIV. SECT. LXXXI.

The prophet's earnest prayer to a most just God for a speedy extirpation of his people's enemies. Striking emblems used; and ancient memorable facts referred to. Grounds of hope to the righteous; fear to the workers of iniquity. The plea of his own honour urged with the Almighty, to engage him to avenge his suffering servants.

Isa. lxiv. 1.

OH that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.

Isa. lxiv. 1.

PERMIT, O thou most holy ^{SECT. 81.} and merciful God, our ^{Isa. lxiv.} energy and vehemence of address, to thee, for relief in our present most dreadful circumstances; and since heathens possess our land, and profane thy sanctuary, do thou be graciously pleased, removing all obstructions, and as it were, rending asunder the intercepting heavens, to descend in robes of vengeance to surprize our enemies, and to rescue thy people; once more display thy majesty and glory, as in that dreadful tempest, when the law was given from the lofty summit of burning *Sinai*; and at thy approach the mountains seemed to melt like wax, to flow like streams of water.

As

^b *Rend, &c.* Procopius observes, that the Jews render this interrogatively, *num rapisti?* hast thou not rent, &c.

SECT. 81.

Ha. lxiv.

As when a raging fire instantly consumeth whatever fuel is laid upon it; the intense heat maketh the water over it to boil, do thou in thy great fury, with redoubled force, convince oppressors and persecutors, who thou art and with what resistless Omnipotence armed: that heathens may be satisfied as to this; and at thy solemn appearance be thrown into the utmost agitation of a trembling, fear and horror.

3 & 4

We raise our hopes, as to the present, from memorable instances of the interposition of thy providence in former ages; when the glories of thy tremendous majesty, and wonders of thy matchless strength, exceeded, in their deliverances, the most sanguine expectations of our renowned ancestors; thou wast pleased to descend; thine inanimate works, confessed the dissolving presence of their Almighty Maker, and the firmest mountains flowed down as in liquid torrents: our faith may be then unshaken, as
to

2. As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence.

3. When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

4. ^c For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

^c For since the beginning, &c. Agreeable to that of *Moses*, Deut. iv. 32, 33, 34. quoted by the apostle, to shew how much the wisdom of christianity exceeded the natural compass of the human understanding; and assist likewise to see clearly what was the meaning of the prophet, 1 Cor. ii. 9. According to the margin it is, *There never was human ear or eye, that did see or hear any God before thee, the God of Israel, that hath done, or prepared to do such things as thou hast prepared for thy people.*

to every thing that can reasonably be desired from our Guardian Deity; since mortals, from the time that the world's foundation was laid, have not heard, seen, nor been able any way to comprehend, nor yet any mind except thy most capacious one, O thou all superintending Jehovah, the astonishing events which thou hast contrived and prepared for those who walk humbly, in a course of obedience, absolutely relying on thy care, and patiently waiting thy Supreme pleasure.

SECT. 81.
Isa. lxiv.

5. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, *those that* remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth, for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

Thou anticipatest his request, and before he can have preferred his petition; surprizest him with expressions of thine acceptance and loving kindness; whose sincere desire and endeavour it is to observe thy laws, and celebrate thy praises: the founder of our race and family could abundantly testify this: and if we cannot, and in thy displeasure thou hast afflicted us: it is most certainly because we have sinned: however, thine indignation, as thy strange work, has usually been of short duration: the ways of thy goodness, as thy settled course in which thou most delightest, long continued in: consequently, we are not destitute

U

of

SECT. 81. of hopes that we shall be spared
and saved.

Isa. lxiv.

6 At the same time it must be confessed, and ought unfeignedly to be lamented, that the generality of our people are a most wicked and perverse generation; as the legally unclean are excluded the benefit of converse with their brethren, they may justly be cast out of the holy land: the foulness of their characters, and enormous course of their actions, would throw contempt on any pretences they should make to piety and virtue; as leaves in autumn they fall and wither, so are all the beauty and splendour of former days decayed and gone. As a rising wind agitates the dust or chaff, so have our iniquities driven us from our native country to a foreign land.

7 Which renders our case still more desperate, under complicated evils and miseries, nothing is thought of to remove them: no return to a regard, eternal God, of thy worship and service: no expressions of repentance, endeavours of virtue, or fervour of devotion to appease thy wrath, conciliate thy favour, or stay thy vindictive hand: our calamities are not greater than the supine folly

6. But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

folly of too many of us under them: thy judgments have shewed that thou wast in anger leaving us, but we have applied no means to prevent thy departure: the visible decrease of our numbers, and depth of our distresses, have but too plainly indicated that for our iniquities thou hast forsaken us, yet no efforts have been used to prevail for thy return.

SECT. 81

Isa. lxiv.

8. But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand.

What have we left to plead before thine offended Majesty, besides the common relation of a father: as thy children thou hast a right to correct us, but shouldst thou not still remember that we are children, and who is our parent: as the potter his clay, thou mayest form and mould us, but must, at the same time, know the weakness and frailty of the materials whereof we are made, and since thine hands have fashioned, should not thine heart feel some relenting and tenderness of sparing mercy.

8. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

However deserved then, yet most gracious Lord be pleased to abate of an extremity of rigour and fierce displeasure: neither gratify a perpetual and unremitted resentment of our transgressions: let it excite thy pity, that we are not heathens and

SECT. 81. enemies, but thy peculiar people, to whom thou hast made a grant of privileges, therefore should shew some lenity in thy dispensations.

Isa. lxiv.

10 If not for our sake, who are enough unworthy, yet for thy own glory, and those circumstances which more immediately concern it: particularly the holy cities, which the children of Israel as thy kind donation inhabit; *Zion* where thy temple for worship stands, laid waste: *Jerusalem* reduced to a state of ruin and desolation: be pleased in thy infinite goodness and mercy to restore them.

10. Thy holy cities are a wilderness, *Zion* is a wilderness, *Jerusalem* a desolation.

11 We repeat it as truly affecting and inexpressibly important, that beautiful and noble edifice, where our forefathers performed the solemnities of religious worship. and with hearts full of gratitude declared thy praises, the devouring fire of the enemy hath left in ashes: truly, whatever we esteemed valuable or delightful is spoiled, or carried away into a foreign land.

11. Our holy and our beautiful house where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

12 Suffer us in such a deplorable condition; to appeal to the affections of thy nature and compassion, as a father and governor, and humbly ask, Canst thou withstand such incentives? or refrain

12. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

refrain from immediate action^{SECT. 81.}
for our succour? Wilt thou be ^{Isa. lxiv.}
silent by a violence offered to¹²
thy strongest inclinations of
goodness and mercy; and by
unnecessary delays enhance our
grievances, which must be con-
fessed to be very great, and which
thou canst with infinite ease soon
redress.

CHAP. LXV. SECT. LXXXII.

Gentiles called. Character given of the Jews. Conceitedness of their own extraordinary sanctity, and supercilious disdain of others. Yet the whole nation not to be destroyed: a select number that repented and worked righteousness to be preserved. Idolatry to be severely repented, and its abettors punished. Halcyon days promised.

Isa. lxv. 1.

SECT. 82.

Isa. lxv.

THE homage of my people, had never wanted a reasonable and kind answer, had it proceeded from good and upright hearts, and regular and virtuous lives accompanied it: it hath been much otherwise: and now, saith the Lord, I am sought of the *Gentiles*, who in former times used not to know me, nor enquire after my name; I am found of and acquainted with them, who had no curiosity for researches of wisdom, nor inclination to be conversant with the worship and service of true religion: with perfect readiness to receive them, I said to heavens,

Isa. lxv. 1.

I Am sought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that sought me not: I said, behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.

a Some render, and the words will bear it, *I am found of them that asked not for me, I am sought of them that sought me not.* Or as *darash* signifies, *to teach or instruct.* I am declared, published, or preached to them that had made no enquiry for such an instructor.

thens, since you are willing to SECT. 82
accept, I am to grant you all ¹ necessary instruction and affis- ¹ isa. lxxv.
tance, to a nation not lately dis-
tinguished with extraordinary
privileges, nor accustomed to
duties of acknowledgment to me
as their God.

2. I have spread
out my hands all the
day unto a rebellious
people, which walk-
ed in a way that was
not good, after their
own thoughts.

With the very earnest and 2
continual entreaties of spread out
hands, I have, by the voice of
my prophets, been soliciting, for
a succession of ages, a most ob-
stinate and disobedient people to
be wise, righteous and happy :
who have nevertheless, proceeded
in the irregular courses, that
their own foolish and wicked
hearts have suggested.

3. A people that
provoketh me to an-
ger continually to
my face, that sacri-
ficeth in gardens, and
burneth incense upon
altars of brick.

A stupid and incorrigable 3
race, that by their superstition
and idolatry, do perpetually in
the most daring manner, insult
mine authority, and invade my
right of supremacy; without
the least deference or regard
to my express command and all-
discerning view, they sacrifice
in gardens devoted to their false
Gods; and neglecting my gold-
en altar, erect and burn incense
to their images, upon those made
of brick.

4. Which remain
among the graves,
and lodge in the mo-
numents, which eat
swine's flesh, and
broth

Their horrid delusions carry 4
them to that degree of frenzy
and madness, that for the prac-
tice of necromancy, they fre-

SECT. 82. ^{quent} the solitary places, where

^{the dead are interred: continue}

Isa. lxxv.

there whole nights, that with
⁴ greater secrecy they may raise the
 ghosts, and receive their intelligence: in direct contradiction
 to a positive law, they eat swines
 flesh, and preserve in their vessels
 broth made of unclean
 things, to be used as ordinary
 food, or poured out as a drink
 offering on their sacrifices.

broth of abominable
things is in their vessels.

⁵ They roundly declare, to
 the prophets, who endeavour by
 their admonitions to reclaim
 them, pray, observe your distance;
 and concern not yourselves to reprove us,
 who are much holier than yourselves;
 compared with whom you are
 polluted and unhallowed: as
 troublesome and offensive as
 smoke is to men's eyes and nostrils,
 are these impostors and
 ungodly hypocrites, saith the
 Lord, to my mind: mine anger
 is continually burning to bear
 them.

⁵. Which say,
 Stand by thyself,
 come not near to
 me, for I am holier
 than thou: these
 are a smoke in my
 nose, a fire that burneth
 all the day.

⁶ As written with a pen of iron
 and point of a diamond in indelible
 characters, these horrid abominations
 are recorded and
 are

⁶. Behold, *it is*
 written before me, I
 will not keep silence,
 but will even recompence
 into their bosom.

^e *Holier*, &c. The original *radix kadesh*, signifies to *sanctify*,
 or to *make holy*, and also to *defile*, or to *make unclean*. It would
 therefore bear to be rendered, *Come not near me for I will make*
you unclean: and in this sense the word is used, *Exod. xxix. 37.*
Lev. xviii. 27.

7. Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together (saith the Lord) which have burnt incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

are ever in full view before me: SECT. 82.
notwithstanding my long forbearance for them, I will certainly take vengeance; and in the awakened terrors of their guilty consciences, punish them with full measure of a just proportion, as a most wicked race: you shall suffer both for those iniquities which are entirely your own, and for those likewise, saith the most righteous God, in which you have followed the steps of your idolatrous ancestors, who have burnt incense to their vile idols upon the mountains; and in a direct contempt of my law, have given them my glory upon the hills; they may reckon themselves excused, if not vindicated by the criminal example of their distant forefathers, but they might have taken warning, and they shall not escape heavy and deserved sufferings.

8. Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servant's sake, that I may not destroy them all.

These sufferings, saith the Lord, will be great but not discriminate and universal: as in the instance of a vine, on which the owner, when he has directed it to be cut down, discovers a cluster of grapes; and bids the dresser spare it, for it is not so decayed, but possibly it may be revived: so will I deal with

SECT. 82. with this degenerate people, for
 the sake of some righteous men,

Isa. lxxv.

8 and sincere servants of mine among them, the whole nation shall not be utterly extirpated.

9 A remnant shall be preserved; and from them, as branches from a stock, a numerous posterity shall proceed, that after they have left *Babylon*, shall fill with inhabitants *Jerusalem*, and the whole mountainous country of *Judea*: my peculiar people who are zealous for good works, shall actually possess it; and the dutiful and humble, be settled there as their lasting inheritance.

10 Their substance shall be considerable; their bleating flocks be folded in the fruitful plains of *Sharon*; and their lowing herds graze, and afterwards lie down to rest in the rich pastures of *Achor*; my beloved people, who in a subserviency to my purposes, and obedience to my laws, have fought my favour, shall enjoy all the advantages they can wish for of an earthly prosperity.

11 You cannot reasonably expect the same treatment, whose character and behaviour are totally the reverse; who have disregarded

9. And I will bring forth a seed out of *Jacob*, and out of *Judah* an inheritor of my mountains, and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servant shall dwell there.

10. And *Sharon* shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of *Achor* a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have fought me.

11. But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a *f* table for that

f Table, according to the lxx. version, to a demon. A manifest reference this, says Mr. Farmer, to the hero gods of the heathens:

that troop, and that furnish a drink-offering unto that number.

garded my commands, and in ^{SECT 82.} worshipping false gods, have ^{Isa. lxx.} avowedly renounced all allegiance to the only living and true One, with the solemnities performed in my holy temple on mount Zion: your festivals have been most diligently prepared for the honour of troops of idols; and your sacrifices and drink-offerings for every individual without exception, of this rabble multitude.

12. Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called ye did not answer, when I speak, ye did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuse that wherein I delighted not.

Being so highly delighted with ¹² the greatest numbers to pay them all respect, you shall be devoted to fall in crouds by the sword, nor shall one ungodly sinner escape: you have prostrated yourselves before your idols, and shall bow down to be slain by your enemies: the remonstrances of my prophets were wholly lost upon you: nor did you return suitable answers to my repeated warnings and calls upon you, by them to change your courses: when I most strenuously urged you, to renounce idolatry, you were

heathens: it seems most natural to understand the passage as reproaching the Jews with sacrificing to some heathen demon, than to any fallen angel. Vide Mr. Lowth in *Loc.* and compare Dr. Sykes's Free Enquiry; also Mr. Farmer on *Mir.* p. 200. Some of the fathers, particularly *Justin Martyr*, maintains that *demons* are the souls of dead men. *Apol. 1. Paris Edit.* 1620. p. 65. May not this instance of superstition be accounted for, from the violence with which imagination has often-operated respecting the deceased.

SECT. 82. were too resolutely bent upon the
 senseless practice, to give any
 Isa. lxxv. ¹³ attention : you acted that which
 you knew full well to be evil and
 wicked to my very face, and in
 the most audacious defiance of
 my threatenings : and delibe-
 rately chose that which I had in
 entire abomination.

¹³ & 14 Therefore hath the offended
 Majesty on high most solemnly
 declared : The greatest diffe-
 rence shall be made betwixt my
 steady adherents, and you who
 have apostatized from and rebel-
 led against me : the former may
 assure themselves of easy and
 comfortable circumstances, the
 latter shall want supplies of com-
 mon necessaries : they shall hold
 up their heads with a full pre-
 sence and entire satisfaction, as
 to what they have acted : your
 crimes cover your countenances
 with blushing shame and abso-
 lute confusion. My sincere ser-
 vants, who in the regular dis-
 charge of their incumbent duty,
 have relied on my care and pro-
 mises, from a conscious integrity
 shall sing for joy ; but you shall
 howl in the loudest outcries, for
 the inexpressible grief of throb-
 bing

¹³. Therefore thus
 saith the Lord God,
 behold, ^g my servants
 shall eat, but ye shall
 be hungry : behold
 my servants shall
 drink, but ye shall
 be thirsty : behold
 my servants shall re-
 joice, but ye shall be
 ashamed.

¹⁴. Behold my ser-
 vants shall sing for
 joy of heart, but ye
 shall cry for sorrow
 of heart, and shall
 howl for vexation of
 spirit.

^g *My servants, &c.* It is observable, with what beauty and
 emergency sentences are connected and made to answer and
 strengthen one another : see also the construction of the *xixth*
Psal. 8—11:

bing guilty breasts : and in the bitterest lamentations, from the heart-felt sense of increasing misery and agony. SECT 82.
Isa. lxx.
14

15. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen : for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name ;

16. That he who blesteth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth ; and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth ; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

You who have been accustomed to pride, and boast yourselves of your descent and national character, that you sprung from patriarchs, and were my peculiar people ; shall hereafter be reckoned scandalous and execrable, to have any connection with or relation to you : so that the following imprecation of evil shall become proverbial : May you be accursed as those wicked *Jews* who were carried into captivity at *Babylon* : for the Lord God shall deliver you up to be slaughtered by your enemies, and call those who are firmly attached to him, by another name ; or take another nation into covenant : so that throughout the world, they who desire any instance of happiness, shall have their eyes and prayers determined to the ever-living and true God : and they who enter into the solemn engagement of an oath, shall not appeal for their veracity to idols, but swear by the Lord JEHOVAH, the omniscient Judge, and terrible avenger of the perjured : for the most desirable change shall be effected

SECT. 82. effected in the state of my people who are devoted to my fear and service: former afflictions being buried in entire oblivion; and miseries removed at the greatest distance, so as never more to pain their eyes, or grieve and vex their hearts.

17 & 18 Such an astonishing alteration shall I produce in their affairs, as if I created a new world for them to inhabit: instead of those dismal scenes of adversity, cloudy heavens that seemed to frown; and a barren earth to utter groans: the sky shall look serene and pleasant; the land rich and fertile: and the distinguishing advantages be commemorated in anniversary festivals, thro' all ages, to the latest posterity: *Jerusalem* shall have reason for an extreme mirth and pleasure; and all that dwell there unfeignedly to rejoice.

19 They may esteem themselves happy, and their hearts glow with joy and gratitude, who dwell at *Jerusalem*; for with great pleasure will I dispense signal favours to my peculiar people in that place: which if they duly improve, and mind the things which belong to their peace, they shall never again be harrassed and distressed, full of com-

17. For behold I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.

18. But be ye glad, and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create *Jerusalem* a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19. And I will rejoice in *Jerusalem*, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

complaints and loud in their SECT. 82.
out-cries.

Isa. lxx.

20

20. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

Moreover, they shall not in ordinary be subjected to an early mortality, or an untimely fate: they shall enjoy the unspeakable blessing of a long and happy life, to the farthest date that their condition or natural constitution extends: their blooming youth shall not be subject to a premature old age, nor carried out to an untimely burial; but shall grow up to their full limits of years, according to the course of nature; and their old men compleat the period of their days: nevertheless, he who leads an ungodly wicked life, if he be an hundred years old shall be detested, his name branded with infamy, and his memory rot.

21. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.

Peace and tranquility are also 21 promised, with the secure enjoyment of property; that they shall be encouraged to build commodious houses, and inhabit them: plant pleasant vineyards, and rejoice their hearts with the exhilarating produce.

22. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for *at* the days of a tree, *are* the days of my people,

It shall not happen, as in the 22 late disorder of public affairs, from foreign invaders, domestic tyrants, or popular insurrections, that others shall possess their houses

SECT. 82. houses and land, and enjoy their
 { fruits: but they shall be per-
 Ifa. lxxv. 22 fectly secure of them: for as the
 22 days of many trees which are
 protracted to a long date, so shall
 be the lives of my people: and
 both in safety and with entire sa-
 tisfaction; the noblest effects of
 their honest industry be preserved
 to them.

23 They shall not spend their
 days and strength in labour and
 care, without reaping the bene-
 fit: nor yet be full of anxious
 thoughts for their dear offspring,
 least evil should befall them;
 and they be slain in battle: fa-
 mine destroy, or pestilence sweep
 them away; both they them-
 selves, and those who spring from
 them, are the genuine posterity,
 and walking in the ways of those
 holy and good men, whom the
 Lord hath engaged to protect
 and bless as his faithful servants,
 therefore shall certainly be hap-
 py and blessed.

24 How desirous I am of their
 well-being, and ready to vouch-
 safe them all wished for bless-
 ings shall be demonstrated;
 and their lowest whispers, or
 only mental ejaculations attend-
 ed to as the loudest voices: be-
 fore they have formed their
 thoughts for an address, and are
 only

ple, and mine elect
 shall long enjoy the
 work of their hands.

23. They shall not
 labour in vain, nor
 bring forth for trou-
 ble: for they are the
 seed of the blessed of
 the Lord; and their
 offspring with them.

24. And it shall
 come to pass, that
 before they call, I
 will answer, and
 while they are yet
 speaking I will hear.

only designing to supplicate; a ^{SECT. 82.} regard shall be shewed; neither shall they have finished the ho-^{Isa. lxxv.}mage before the aid and supply²⁴ appears to be granted them.

25. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat: they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains, saith the Lord.

As if they were transformed²⁵ from beasts of prey, into the gentlest and mildest of human creatures, their tempers shall be surprizingly altered: the good and fierce shall be affable and humble: the turbulent and brutish meek and tractable: the ravenous and cruel quiet and harmless: and the wily serpent, being contented with the food allotted it, shall no longer practice its subtle arts to the prejudice of either man or beast.

CHAP. LXVI. SECT. LXXXIII.

The vanity of relying upon temples and sacrifices shewed from considerations of the divine Majesty and Omnipresence. Legal homage an abomination without moral righteousness. Pretences to piety, and to advance God's glory, as coverts for vice and wickedness, no better than vile hypocrisy. The sincerely good and virtuous encouraged. Judgments denounced against the ungodly and impenitent. Peace, safety, and an increase of their numbers promised to the righteous. Idolaters to meet with heavy judgments. The faithful to be convened from all parts for God's united and unfeigned homage and service: the irreclaimable to be made a most dreadful spectacle.

Isa. lxvi. 1.

SECT. 83.

Isa. lxvi.

TO shew how insignificant pompous temples and costly sacrifices were in the divine estimate, compared with moral righteousness, the eternal and unbounded Deity hath declared, the vast circumference of heaven is comprehensive only, as it were of a small throne or seat for my glorious majesty, and the whole earth a little foot-stool to tread on: where then is the foundation to be laid of an edifice to contain my presence? and where the local residence to include my ineffable essence, or limit and repose the activity of my immense attributes?

The

Isa. lxvi. 1.

THUS saith the Lord, the heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my foot-stool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? where *is* the place of my rest?

2. For all those things hath mine hand made; and all those things have been said the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

The vastest variety of objects that are continually presented to your astonished view, are no other than the contrivance of my wisdom, and the production of mine almighty power: and whatever hath been, is or shall be, must consist by means of my sustaining influences: from eternity is my existence to be dated: if I wanted a mansion, the universe is at my command, I should hardly choose an house of clay: the habitation and temple, that forgetting all besides, I have most respect for, is the truly good and humble heart, which is free from all lordly arrogance and vain ambition: which is ashamed and afflicted for errors and miscarriages: and most sincerely concerned, whenever the law is read, to be deeply impressed with a sense of its importance, so as not to decline from its constant obedience to the right hand or to the left.

SECT. 83.
Isa. lxvi.

3. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man: he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood: he that burneth

Whereas ungodly sinners, abandoned reprobates, or dissembling vile hypocrites, can do nothing till they have repented, that is acceptable, nor offer any sacrifices that will not be offensive and displeasing: slaying an ox,

X 2

OX,

h Look, i. e. see with acceptance, and approve the contrite; but is of purer eyes than that he can behold, i. e. regard and approve sin. Hab. i. 13.

SECT. 83. ³ox, as a branch of my worship, is as really disapproved as murdering a man: offering up a lamb, as killing a dog or other unclean creature: presenting an oblation of first-fruits, as if he offered most plainly to provoke; swine's blood, that might not be eaten nor yet touched; burning incense on mine altar, as if he avouched its supremacy by praying to an idol, or celebrating its praises; rather than act as I have required, they have followed their own devices, fought out many inventions, and had the highest pleasure in those things which I have in entire abomination.

4 Having put these foolish cheats upon themselves, and most absurdly endeavoured to impose upon my omniscience, saith the all-discerning Sovereign; I will, in their punishment, expose them to gross delusions, and in their fears and horrors, which by their crimes are brought upon them, to the derision of their heathen enemies: inasmuch as when I alarmed them by my prophets what their danger was, they shewed not a juster sense of things, no one returned me a suitable answer: when I instructed them better, they regarded not
so

eth incense, as if he blessed an idol, yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them: because when I called none did answer; when I speak they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

so as to change their evil courses: ^{SECT. 83.}
 they enhanced their wrong con- ^{Isa. lxvi.}
 duct by an audaciousness and ob-
 stinacy of vice: and were not a-
 shamed to give an avowed pre-
 ference to those things that were
 too prejudicial to themselves,
 for me to have any pleasure in
 them.

5. Hear the word
 of the Lord, ye that
 tremble at his word,
 your brethren that
 hated you, and cast
 you out for my name's
 sake, said, Let the
 Lord be glorified, but
 he shall appear to
 your joy, and they
 shall be ashamed.

As to you, God's penitent
 and sincere servants, who trem-
 ble at the awful threatenings of
 his word, and whose humble
 and contrite hearts he is pleased
 to inhabit as his holy temple,
 attend diligently, saith the pro-
 phet, to what I now declare,
 Your professed brethren have
 separated themselves from, and
 been greatly disgusted with and
 utterly rejected you, for the re-
 gard you have shewed to my
 name and my truth: all this
 have they done under pretext of
 God's glory, and from a strong
 presumption of his concurrence
 by some public judgment or ca-
 lamity to vindicate their rash
 censures: whereas in due season
 he shall appear by some distin-
 guishing marks of his favour to
 your joy, to express his appro-
 bation of your sincerity of obe-
 dience; and by some tokens of
 his displeasure, to cover their
 faces with shame and confusion.

SECT. 83.

Iſa. lxvi.

Hark! the dreadful day is come, and methinks I hear a most alarming voice of men, in the confused noise of a conquering enemy who has surprized the city, and is plundering the houses, with the doleful outcries of the spoiled and slaughtered inhabitants: a most affecting voice also from the temple which is rifled, and a most shocking carnage made there, whither the people had fled for refuge: a most loud and solemn voice, as of the Lord Jehovah, who by these instruments is executing his vengeance on irreclaimable sinners, and his avowed adversaries.

7 Notwithstanding these dismal scenes of havock and tumult, ruin and bloodshed, the righteous among my people shall not only be wonderfully preserved, but remarkably increased: without much struggle or labour *Jerusalem* and the land of *Judea* shall be replenished with people: all on a sudden without difficulty or danger, become a great and mighty nation.

8 & 9 How amazing and incomprehensible, are the ways of heaven and providence! How new, unheard of, unseen and out of the ordinary course of nature! Shall a single

6. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies.

7. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child.

8. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once?

once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth the children.

9. i Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? faith the Lord: Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? faith thy God.

10. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.

a single day produce the fruits of the earth in full maturity and perfection? Shall a whole community of people instantaneously arise from nothing, into a state of existence, splendour, and posterity? No sooner did Zion arrive at her appointed time for travail, than she brought forth an incredible multitude, as it were a nation at once. Shall I preserve my people, like a child-bearing woman to the precise moment only that her pangs are to begin, to the fixed period that they are to be freed from captivity, and not deliver them, faith the God of our salvation? or shall I undertake their restoration, and bring them very near to it, yet not fully effect it: faith the Infinite Majesty, the self-existent Jehovah?

As it is usual for friends to congratulate one another on account of escapes from dangers, or difficulties surmounted: let those who wish well to Jerusalem rejoice in the pleasing event of her people's return from a

X 4

tedious

i Shall I bring, &c. The original may be rendered, shall I cause to break forth, or cause children to be born, and shall I not beget other children, who also shall be born, shall I not go on to increase and multiply? Shall I cause to bring forth, &c. shall I beget and shut up: i. e. restrain from bringing forth: or, as some interpret, shall I confer on mankind in general the power of propagating their species, and shall I withhold this blessing from my mount Zion.

SECT 83.

Isa. lxvi.

8 & 9

SECT. 83. tedious captivity: those who

Isa. lxvi. ¹⁰ unfeignedly lamented their late calamitous circumstances, exult in raptures, that they are now no more.

¹¹ That as tender infants draw great plenty of natural nourishment from the protuberant breasts of their fond mothers: they may participate to their entire satisfaction in her restoration to her former wealth and power, prosperity and glory; that you who are truly concerned for the peace of *Zion*, may be greatly delighted in enjoying your shares of her privileges and blessings.

^{12, 13.} Every thing that is desirable & ¹⁴and felicitating, saith the Lord of the whole creation, will I grant them in an uninterrupted course, like the running water of a large river; and the wealth and honour of heathens in abundance, like a flowing stream: ye shall be refreshed, supported, and cherished, as so many children by a most indulgent parent: as a most affectionate mother by her embraces, soothes her offspring, that has met with some disaster, or that she has been obliged to chide for some fault; so the Lord declares, will I console my people whom I have corrected: moreover, this favour, which

^{11.} That ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

^{12.} For thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the *Gentiles* like a flowing stream; then shall ye suck, ye shall be born upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.

^{13.} As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you: and ye shall be comforted in *Jerusalem*.

^{14.} And when ye see *this* your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known towards

towards his servants,
and his indignation
towards his enemies.

which must highly enhance it; SECT. 83.
shall be vouchsafed in your be- Isa. lxxi.
loved city *Jerusalem*, which so 12, 13,
long has been desolate, but shall & 14
recover its former prosperity and
glory: and when these most
welcome scenes shall be presented
to your admiring view, you can-
not but be most sincerely glad,
and your dry bones, almost ex-
hausted vigour, and faded beauty
be renewed: like an herb which
has been sickly and withered,
with the rigorous blast of a sharp
winter; but with the spring's
fostering warmth grows fresh
and green. You shall farther
be fully convinced, to the kind
dispositions of whose providence
you are indebted for these pleas-
ing changes; and whose indig-
nation it is that your enemies
are suffering.

15. For behold
the Lord will come
with fire, and with
his chariots like a
whirlwind, to render
his anger with fury,
and his rebuke with
flames of fire.

In the gentlest terms, by the 15
mouth of his prophets, hath the
Lord admonished and exhorted:
alas! to no purpose, therefore
will he declare war against the
wicked and incorrigible; and
descend after the dreadful man-
ner of a most raging tempest:
as it were, ride in his chariot
with the rapidity, horrid noise,
and over-bearing violence, of a
perfect hurricane that carries
every thing before it: his resent-
ment

SECT. 83. ment clad in such vehemence of

Isa. lxvi. ¹⁵ relentless fury, as threatens an entire destruction; and his sharp rebukes in such volleys of flaming fire, as leave nothing behind them but ruins and ashes.

¹⁶ Having been long patient, and in vain besought them in the kindest treatment, and with the mildest messages to be reformed: now will the Lord awake to plead matters, with all ranks and stations, by dint of the desolating judgments of fire and sword; and multitudes shall fall by the resistless weight of his vindictive arm.

¹⁷ The first victims, they may surely expect to be, who have in the highest degree provoked and insulted me, by separating and preparing themselves with pagan lustrations for the superstitious ceremonies and sacrifices of idol worship: performing them in gardens or consecrated groves, behind some exalted spreading tree, appointed for that purpose: eating swine's flesh also, in express contradiction to my law; with other instances of profaneness; as the mountain-mouse, pronounced unclean and an abomination: which shall all, one as well as another, be utterly destroyed; not one of them escape.

^{16.} For by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many.

^{17.} They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens, behind one tree in the midst: eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

My

18. For *I know* their works and their thoughts: *it* shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory.

My extreme long suffering ^{SECT 83.} with them, alters not the case, ^{Isa. lxvi.} but I am perfectly acquainted ¹⁸ with the actions and characters, secret designs and inmost recesses of this ungodly and rebellious people; and since they are obstinate and incorrigible in their transgressions, my purpose is fixed, and the event certain, that different nations of *Gentiles* shall unite to become my people, instead of them: shall assemble in my name; and learn the nature of my attributes, the glories of my providence, and the tidings of salvation published to the ends of the earth.

19. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to Tarshish, Pul, and k Lud* that draw the bow, *to Tubal and Javan*, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the *Gentiles*.

Those whom my especial vi-^{19 & 20} gilance shall preserve from the impending storm of a common destruction, shall have a distinguishing sign given, or certain discriminating mark fixed upon them; intimating my views to dispatch them upon messages to foreign kingdoms: *to Tarshish, Pul and Lud*, where they are famous for their skill in archery: *to Tubal, Javan*

k Lud that draw, &c. that is, were dexterous at handling the bow: historians relate that they made use of bows four cubits long. *Pul* or *Phile*, a town situated between the river *Nile* and *Ethiopia*: the calling of the *Gentiles* is understood to be here referred to; and this prophecy accomplished in the success with which the *eunuch* of queen *Candace* published the christian doctrine in that country, so that it remains to this day. *Jer. xlv.* 9. *Plin. l. xii. Herod. l. 6. Diod. Sic. l. iii.*

SECT. 83.

Ma. lxvi.

19 & 20

Javan, and other remote countries, where they are unacquainted with my most illustrious character and wonderful displays of my perfections and providence; among admiring heathens they shall proclaim my most exalted dignity and matchless glory. The people who were reputed unclean and afar off, shall be brought near, as your brethren; and conducted safe, as equally devoted to my fear, into my temple, saith the Lord and ruler of the universe; after the manner, that you bring an offering to be presented to him in a clean vessel, into the house of the most high God.

21 And from amongst them who used not to be admitted into the temple, will I appoint persons to my peculiar service in the offices of the sanctuary; and they shall minister before me, saith the Lord, as if they had originated from the same families with the *Jewish* priests and Levites.

22 For as it is my fixed purpose to produce such a happy change to my people in their circumstances,

20. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain *Jerusalem*, saith the Lord, as the children of *Israel* bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord.

21. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord,

22. For as the new heavens, and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before

1 *New heavens*, &c. Such expressions are usual in the prophetic raptures, to mark out the great events which happen in this sub-lunary world; and, strictly speaking, only signify the establishment

before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

stances, as if I was to create a new world that should continue for ever; so hath the Almighty declared, shall your posterity consisting of *Gentiles* also, and your exemplary behaviour and a growing character as an holy and good people be perpetuated.

SECT. 83.

Isa. lvi. 22

23. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.

24. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched:

At the same time, it shall be the constant custom, as the seasons return, in public assemblies, like the solemn meetings of former days to attend God's homage and service: and my worshippers, saith the Lord, shall consist of people of all nations and languages: my faithful servants, who shall be spectators of the dreadful punishment of the wicked and impenitent, in the plunder and burning of the city.

blishment of a new kingdom. Thus, when no more than an extraordinary calamity, the subversion of a state, or reverse of fortune in a private family, are designed to be represented, *the earth is made to tremble; the stars to fall from heaven; the sun to be darkened; and the moon not to give its light.* At the same time, may it not be suggested, that this figurative manner is not without a latent meaning, and is borrowed from certain facts that the revolving ages of futurity shall, in some distant period, more clearly unfold.

^m *One new moon*, that is, it shall be their constant custom, they shall be perpetually employed in the returning seasons after this manner.

ⁿ *Fire be quenched, &c.* An allusion to the valley of *Tophet*, which received the filth of *Jerusalem*, and was greatly offensive from the putrefaction of dead bodies that were from time to time thrown into it; with the almost smothering stench and smoke of the fire which burnt continually to consume them.

SECT. 83. city and temple, have my promise that they shall escape the dire catastrophe: only be eyewitnesses of the unburied carcases of their idolatrous and incorrigible brethren, lying in putrified heaps above ground; and most proper to be carried and consumed in the valley of *Tophet* where the fire is never extinguished: but they are exposed to all the world as objects of entire contempt and abhorrence.

quenched: and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

Isa. lxvi.
23, & 24

F I N I S.

ILLUSTRATION

